



Identity Crisis and Estrangement in Manju Jaidka's Novel *Scandal Point*

Darshan Lal*

ORCID 0009-0006-0450-622X

Assistant Professor of English DAV College (Lahore) Ambala City

***Corresponding Author:** Darshan Lal, darshanlal004@gmail.com Assistant Professor of English DAV College (Lahore) Ambala City

Abstract

Aims: Manju Jaidka's second novel *Scandal Point* (2011) deals with lives of many people and their problems of identity-crisis.

Methodology and Approaches: Various articles tilted *The mystery behind Shimla's Scandal Point*, *Myths of Shimla's Mall and Scandal Point* by Raaja Bhasin, *Come to the Scandal Point* by Ashwini Shrama, *The not-so scandalous affair of Shimla's Scandal Point* by Panchali Dey, *Punjabi by nature: The Scandal of Shimla's Point took place in Patiala* by Khushwant, *Scandal Point's Shimla—The Inside Story* by Neeraj D, *Scandal Point and power of rumour* by Raaja Bhasin and a research article titled *The Problematics of the*

Identity in Manju Jaidka's Scandal Point by Meenu Bhole are reviewed. The novel deals with various themes like love, loss, conspiracy, murder and identity crisis.

Outcome: *The paper explores the predicaments of Kunwar Kartar Singh's loss of identity along with Betty and Attar Singh.*

Conclusion and suggestions. *The novelist explores the themes of identity crisis, resentment and anger of Kunwar Kartar Singh after knowing his real identity.*

Keywords: Keywords: love, intrigues, betrayal, loss, murder, identity.

Volume: 1 Issue: 2

Paper Type: Research Article

Article History: Received: April 19, 2021, Revised: June 28, 2021, Accepted: July 18, 2021

The paper can be accessed online on: <https://literaryherm.org>

Scandal Point (2011) by Manju Jaidka is a story of various themes like love, loss, intrigues, betrayal, conspiracy, loss of identity and murder. Although Maharaja Rajinder Singh of Patiala was married and had a son but he fell in love with the Viceroy's daughter Betty. They both eloped from Simla to Patiala on road. Regarding this Puneet Sidhu in her article titled Manju Jaidka's *Scandal Point* Set in colonial India has remarked: ". . . *Scandal Point* is set in colonial India approaching the twentieth century. A handsome young ruler of an Indian princely state angers the British rulers by falling in love and eloping with the Viceroy's daughter. It is not an ordinary romance, as the elopement has far-reaching consequences." (Sidhu n.p) There was a great obstacle to bring Betty directly to the palace so she was kept at the house of an English couple the Bryans who lived nearby the palace and one of Maharaja's loyal friends. Not only Betty faced loss

of identity, but also Florence and Attar Singh's son Kartar Singh were victims of identity crisis. This novel is not only a simple historical novel; it is filled with plethora of various themes. Manju Jaidka has very beautifully designed everything in a web of words. The present paper explores how the characters in this novel become victim of identity crisis and conspiracy beyond love and security.

The novel is studied through the lens of various themes like identity crisis, existentialism proposed by various thinkers and theorists like Albert Camus, Jean Paul Sartre and Gayatri Spivak Chakravarty. The main objective of identity crisis is to understand the real self. Primary Sources: *Scandal Point* (2011) by Manju Jaidka is primary data. Secondary Sources: Relevant secondary data like critical reviews on *Scandal Point*, academic research articles on identity crisis and webliography are studied s supporting data for this paper.

Identity crisis is a stage of confusion and uncertainty where an individual struggle to understand and define his sense of self. Psychologist Erik Erikson coined the term identity crisis. He explores that during identity crisis an individual feels disconnected from his past self, unaware of his past self, confused in his present stage and always in conflict about his personal and social identity. Albert Camus talked about 'crisis of meaninglessness or absurdity' which human beings face in their search for self-understanding. Gayatri Spivak Chakravarty has different view point on identity crisis. She says that it is not natural rather it is constructed from outside through culture, language, power and history. In this context Meenu Bhola in her paper titled The Problematics of Identity in Manju Jaidka's *Scandal Point* has pointed out: "Identity is used in the fields of sociology, psychology, philosophy and literary criticism . . . Identity implies a sense of being conscious about one's self. It is a concept which can be understood by one's identification with significant 'Others.' His parents, his race, his religion, his country from this significant 'Other.' An identity is formed by the beliefs,

attitudes and values of the place to which one belongs. When anyone tries to adopt new customs and culture which were alien to him earlier, then the crisis begins and restlessness sets in. (Bhola 11) Famous psychoanalyst Erik Erikson says that identity crisis is a time of intensive and exploration of different ways to looking one self. Another American psychoanalyst Keniston Kenneth says that some relationships which have been existed naturally, lose their true meaning and relationships. In diasporic literature identity crisis has different forms. Many diasporic writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai, Monica Ali, and Manju Kapur in their writings have expressed identity crisis due to cultural displacement. In the present novel titled *Scandal Point* various characters like Betty, Florence, Kunwar Kartar Singh faces identity crisis due to political, social and cultural belongingness.

In the Prologue of the novel the narrator, Kunwar Kartar Singh, proclaims about his identity. He remarks: "I am no Oedipus but my life seems to have followed the same pattern. In Oedipus's story there were three roads that met at a fatal point, determining his destiny. One led from the temple of Apollo, another from Corinth and a third took him straight to Thebes – to his doom. Fleeing from his destiny, Oedipus headed straight into the inexorable clutches of his fate. . . . I am no Oedipus but my life seems dictated by a similar inexorable fate, surrounded by enigmas. (Jaidka xi-xii)

The first chapter gave the description of RRR, Kunwar Kartar Singh alias Kaka's meeting with sardar Attar Singh. When his bibi was on her death bed she sent for Kartar Singh and asked him to go to Amritsar and met there sardar Attar Singh. He went to meet Attar Singh in Amritsar. Kunwar Kartar Singh narrated his story to Attar Singh. He (Kunwar Kartar Singh) told that he was living happily with his bibi, his two brothers and a sister at Lahore. He got education at Aitchison College at Lahore. His own father Maharaja Rajinder Singh alias Rajen, whom he called mamu, came to meet him from Patiala and brought gifts for him.

One day he was told that he (mamu) died in a hunting accident. Kunwar Kartar Singh felt very sad because of not having any gifts from his mamu now. Bibi lamented on the death of mamu. He remarks “. . . Bibi was babbling: ‘My poor unfortunate baby, my little darling.’ She held me tightly. My brothers are in a same room and continued to sleep through the night. Bibi didn’t hold tem close, nor did she weep over them. She did not call them the poor unfortunate baby or darling. (Jaidka 2) This clearly shows that Kunwar Kartar Singh has many questions and wants those questions to be answered. He thinks why he is the only unfortunate child than his siblings.

After completing his education, his brothers went to England for higher studies. He also asked that he would like to go to England for his studies. Listening to all this Bibi remarked that he could not go to foreign land. His bib was seriously ill so she sent for Kunwar Kartar Singh and asked him to go to Amritsar and met Sardar Attar Singh there to know the answers of his question. He reached there and introduced himself Kunwar Kartar Singh to a lady. She listened to him and her mouth was wide open. Her eyes were broadening with amazement and “. . . she got up from her seat and came up to me and embraced me tightly.” (Jaidka 6) She seemed twenty but she treated me like his son. Seeing the surprised look on my face she continued: ‘You are like my son. After all, Sardar Saheb’s son is my son too. I have no grudges against you.’ (Jaidka 5-6) Listening to the word grudges from her mouth, Kunwar Kartar Singh was in a great dilemma he could not understand why she was talking like this.

Kunwar Kartar Singh was taking rest and waiting for Sardar Attar Singh. When he (Attar Singh) came, “. . . he walked up, caught me by my shoulders. He looked at me smilingly and asked: ‘Puttar, you have come from Lahore.’ It was more of a statement than a question.” (Jaidka 7) He further remarks: “This man facing me knew what I was here for. He understood me. He was mine. But was this inexplicable bond between him and me?” I searched in those deep-set eyes . .

.” (Jaidka 7) This clearly shows the uneasiness and dilemma of Kunwar Kartar Singh. He is filled with so many unanswered questions. Kunwar Kartar Singh told Sardar Attar Singh everything about his bibi’s death. They both went into room. Attar Singh opened a cupboard and took out a thing that was wrapped up in a blue silk cloth. Placing it on the table, he removed the cloth from an ‘ivory-inlaid carved wooden box.” (Jaidka 8) He took out some items from the box like ‘diary, the bundle of papers, and a notebook.” (Jaidka 8) and handed over to Kunwar Kartar Singh. Kunwar Kartar Singh opened the diary and turned the pages and found many items: “Then I thumbed the notebook. There were exclamations filled with a large spidery hand that seemed to be a woman. I turned the pages at random. There were exclamation marginal notes and doodles, drawings and random poems along with lengthy, closely written text. . . the loose pages tied together revealed that they were some certificates, official records, a telegram, and some letters with remnants of broken seals still sticking to them.” (Jaidka 8) Seeing all this Kunwar Kartar Singh asked Sardar Attar Singh, ‘What is this?’ He said that these were the answers of all his questions. He further told him (Kunwar Kartar Singh) that all these documents belonged to him. Kunwar Kartar Singh was surprised to know that how these items were belonged to him. He (Sardar Attar Singh) said with an amazement: “Officials records will tell you that you are my son from my first marriage.” (Jaidka 9)

He further told him (Kunwar Kartar Singh) that only a few people knew the truth. He also told him (Kunwar Kartar Singh) that the records and documents would put some light on his questions and astonishment. Kunwar Kartar Singh remarks: “I had thought that Attar Singh was the end of my journey. When I had knocked at his gate earlier during the day, I had imagined that I was close to the object of my quest but now I realized that it was not the end but the beginning of a quest. I saw the answers of my unasked questions eluding my grasp, floating like autumn leaves in a dust storm, flying into my face and blinding me with

suddenness of their impact.”(Jaidka 10) Knowing all this from Sardar Attar Singh that he was son of Sardar Attar Singh, Kunwar Kartar Singh was very shocked and surprised. He (Kunwar Kartar Singh) opines: “What I did gather that baba and bibi were not my real parents; they had taken the role of parents when I was just a baby. At the same time, Attar Singh’s remark that I was his son ‘only on paper’ confused me even more.” (Jaidka 10) This clearly shows that Kunwar Kartar Singh is living in a disguised personality without knowing what his real identity is.

Believing on this fairytale story was difficult for Kunwar Kartar Singh. He remarks: “It was the kind of a story one read about in fairy tales. The kind one could encounter in a classical mythology---with protagonists like Oedipus Rex, Paris or Hercules, or whatever.” (Jaidka 11) Kunwar Kartar Singh further says: “A bejeweled king in shining robes on a sleek dark horse, a beautiful, fair maiden with flashy eyes and blonde hair. A dreamy city on a mountain top. Tall trees, winding roads, music and laughter in a magical sky. Wafting clouds and whispering winds. An elopement, hue and cry, excitement, suspense, thrill. Followed by pain, sorrow, intrigue and death. It was all there in this narrative.” (Jaidka 11)

Kunwar Kartar Singh was taking rest on stone wall there at ridge and inspected the valley. He became nostalgic. The writer has very beautifully shown the inner thoughts of Kunwar Kartar Singh’s mind through flashback technique: “It comes back to me today on the ridge, as I sit resting my back against the stone walls of the parapet overlooking the valley. I go back to that night in Amritsar, the story that came to me through the dog-eared pages of the red-leather bound notebook, and fragments of the tale narrated by Attar Singh.” (Jaidka 11) This clearly shows the dilemma and complexity of Kunwar Kartar Singh’s mind. He is not able to decide who his real parents are. Those who live there at Lahore—baba and bibi or in Amritsar Sardar Attar Singh—who is claiming that he is his son only

on pages. This situation is very confusing for Kunwar Kartar Singh and he loses in train of thoughts and contemplates.

At the weekend of every Friday the Viceroy and his wife hosted a night Ball party in British Simla. During Friday night, Viceregal lodge was the center of all merry-making activities. The Viceregal lodge was full of various types of activities like dancing, playing of the band etc. All the white people gathered there to enjoy. Besides the Britishers, some young rulers of Patiala, Kapurthala and Deeg were invited. Rajen alias Rajinder Singh also invited in the Friday Night Ball. At the ball he saw Viceroy's daughter Betty and immediately possessed by her beauty. He stared her and tried to talk to her. Finally, he succeeded and asked Betty to meet him on the terrace. She went to meet him on the terrace and Rajen asked her to come with him to the palace at Patiala. Listening to this Betty was astonished. Rajen insisted her to marry him but Betty was silent and could respond at that time. He also told her about his first wife at Patiala and admitted his true love for Betty: ". . . you will be my favourite queen. I will build another palace for you. Our children will be royal heirs. Our son will be prince and have the right of succession after me." (Jaidka 34-35) This shows that for fulfilling his love for Betty Rajen promises her all the authorities of the palace.

Betty listened to all this but she knew that her mother never approved this marriage as Rajen was married and had a son from his first marriage. Both Rajen and Betty eloped from Simla and reached Patiala. Rajen didn't take Betty directly to his palace rather he took her to Charles and Minnie Bryan's lodge. All the three—Rajen, Charles and Minnie contemplated over this matter seriously and came to a conclusion and they remark: "We can't let the people know that we have stolen a woman from the British camp. We will have to hide her. Camouflage. Keep her unknown." (Jaidka 43) After this Charles and Minnie decided to keep her with them: "Let her remain with us. She is white and can pass off as our daughter. And everyone knows that Florence was supposed to visit us

this year. So we could always give out that it is Florence who has arrived to be with us.” (Jaidka 44) Here it is very obvious that Betty has lost her real identity without knowing her camouflaged identity. This is done by the British couple merely to escape from the wrath of British queen.

Betty lived with Charles and Minnie as their daughter Florence. She received all the palatial comforts there. Rajen came to meet her at intervals. Rajen former wife bari Maharani didn't know anything about this affair. Once Rajen was with his mother and was very perturbed. He couldn't speak a word. His mother examined everything and asked his son about his confusion. He was silent. He knew that she was a very shrewd mother and could surmise everything. She remarks: “. . . you want to talk about Miss Bryan, don't you she came directly to the point. Miss Bryan. The name was very unfamiliar Rajen and he realized with a start that she was referring to Betty. After all, in Patiala she was known as Bryan's daughter, Florence.” (Jaidka 64)

This shows how Betty loses her real identity from Betty to Florence and she is living with this identity unknowingly.

When the Britishers came to know the reality of Betty's elopement with Rajen they blacklisted Maharaja Rajender Singh and banned his entry in Simla. Maharaja made a palace at Chail. Betty had been in Patiala for three months and became familiar with Punjabi Culture. People knew her as Florence Bryan here: “Florence Bryan as Betty was known in Patiala . . . had been at the palace for three months.” (Jaidka 74) She came to know many things and befriended with a few women and with the help of her companions Harbir and Jasbir, she could speak broken Punjabi words. Rajen and Betty had not married yet and Betty was pregnant.

Maharaja Rajinder Singh spent most of the time in company of Betty and didn't pay much attention to bari Maharani, Jasmer Kaur. Badi Maharani had given him a son. She asked him indirectly his visits to Bryan's palace. He told her

that he had interest in Bryan's daughter, Florence. Listening to this badi Maharani lapsed and kept silent. A deep unbridgeable ditch could be seen between them. Rajen's marriage with badi Maharani was an arranged marriage but with Betty it was completely different: "With Betty . . . his relationship with Betty was different. He felt it was more human: there was passion here which was missing in the marriage with the badi maharani. There was love ---the kind he had not experienced ever before. There was a longing, a yearning in him, sleeping into his very being, a part of his pulse, in the blood of his veins, in the palpitation of his heart . . . "(Jaidka 75-76).

This clearly shows Rajen's deep love for Betty. That love creates an unbridgeable gap between Rajen and badi maharani and because of this love Rajen has devoted himself completely to Betty. Maharaja Rajinder Singh told everything to his mother about Betty. He told her that she was the daughter of Viceroy. During Baisakhi festival in Punjabi attire Betty met bibi (Rajen's mother) at gurudwara. They exchanged pleasantries. Seeing Betty with Maharaja, a group of rebels became furious and they decided to take revenge. But seeing Betty's conduct towards gurudwara their rage subsided. When maharaja was greeting the subjects of his state, Betty asked Maharaja to talk to the gatherings:

. . . She turned and faced the crowd. Folding her hands, she bowed her head. Then, as the Maharaja, the rajmata, the Bryans and all the others looked on in surprise, wondering what she was up to, she held up the helm of her dupatta in both hands in a gesture of supplication and addressed the gatherings of Patiala . . . Main tuhade vich rehna chahundi han. Eh meri sachche dil di awaz hai. Sachche dil nal meri ek benti hai ki tussi mainu pyar naal apna samjho te apna kabool karo. (Jaidka 111)

Listening to these words from Betty, all the gatherings were silent and accepted her as their choti maharani and they shouted in unison:

Wahe guru ji da khalsa . . . Waheguru ji di fateh. (Jaidka 111) Betty was accepted as choti maharani by the people of Patiala. Maharaja Rajinder Singh addressed the gatherings: “My people this is your new maharani, Bibi Harnam Kaur. From today she is a sardarni. In the presence of all gathered here, she will take the Sikh vows and become one of us. In the presence of all my people I will marry her. (Jaidka 112)

This clearly shows loss of identity of Betty. First she becomes Florence Bryan and later Bibi Harnam Kaur. She is doubly marginalized. These names are given to her only to hide her real identity and she has to live with this name here. Jasbir and Harbir’s brother Attar Singh did love marriage in Amristsar. It was an inter-caste marriage his wife was pregnant. Harbir came running in Betty’s room and started crying. Her cries filled the entire part of palace. She was pacing to and fro. She beat her breast and collapsed on the floor. Finally, she told that her Bhabhi died during child birth. A baby boy was born and named Kartar Singh. Betty also became a mother of baby boy. Maharaja Rajinder Singh arranged a naming ceremony and granthi suggested them letter ‘R’. Listening to the letter R, Betty suggested: “Can we call him Richard. After my great uncle. He was Sir Richard Burton, knighted by Her Majesty.” (Jaidka 137) Rajen replied thoughtfully: “you see, he has to be ‘Singh’ the way all of us, Sikhs are. So Richard Singh would not really. He left the sentence in complete. ‘I get it, ‘said Betty. Quickly. ‘They both through a different name with middle name ‘R’ with a prefix R. Rajen at once called him Ram Rahim.” (Jaidka 137) Listening to this name Betty looked at him distrustfully. So after a pause Rajen said: “We’ll call him Ram Rahim. Sri Ram Rahim Singh . . . Where did you get this name from’ She was curious? ‘He is a Singh. He has English blood, so he can be Richard, too. But it would be inappropriate to call him ‘Sir’ so let him be ‘Sri’. Sri Richard. And he is going to be on good terms with the Hindus and Muslims, so let him Ram Rahim. And his name he will combine the secular and progressive spirit of

our times. How are you, Sri Richard Ram Rahim Singh, . . .? ‘He looks a bit an angrez, doesn’t he asked Rajen. He does” Betty replied. (Jaidka 138)

This shows that a new name is given to Rajkumar—Sri Richard Ram Rahim Singh, but soon his father decided to call him kaka: “Kakaji. That was the prince, the Rajkumar that was his first name. Kaka akka Sri Richard Ram Rahim Singh. The name given to him by his parents, Betty and Rajen. It was a name that would soon be taken away from him, even before he learned to say it. This name, which he acquired when his father held him in his arms for the first time would soon be abandoned. Kaka would soon be christened all over again without anyone knowing it.” (Jaidka 138) This shows like his mother Sri Richard Ram Rahim Singh becomes the victim of identity crisis.

Bibi Harnam Kaur alias Betty, Florence was in her chamber. A maid brought milk for her. Milk tumbler was too hot to hold so Betty left it there without taking a sip from it. In the meantime, she was busy in attending kaka. A pet cat Misty lapped up the milk and froth came from its mouth and it was dead. Betty felt horrified to see all this. She heard a voice from behind: “Rani sahiba, your milk.” (Jaidka 141) Betty turned at once in terror and pointing to the empty glass of milk and said that she just gave it to her. But maid said that she was late in bringing milk because of her shoe broke on the way. Everything was inquired and Betty found that the glass in which milk was brought was different from the real one. Betty went to Minnie’s house and told her the whole story. Minnie said: “Don’t you realise my dear, the milk was meant for you.” (Jaidka 142)

Jasbir and Harbir returned from Amritsar with their nephew Kartar Singh in December. At Lohri they met Betty and she asked them about Kartar Singh. She asked them to bring Kartar to Patiala so that both Kaka and Kartar could play together. Betty along with Jasbir, Harbor, Kartar Singh and kaka reached Chail. Both the children looked similar in size and appurtenance. They could be recognized merely through their clothes. Due to chill at Chail Jasbir wanted to

wear a sweater to Kartar Singh but he was crying so Betty asked her to wrap up him in kaka's blanket. Betty took Kartar in her lap, made him sleep, wore him kaka's attire and slept him in kaka's cradle. Kaka alias price was with his mother in her room. When Harbir went to lay kaka in his cradle, she became motionless: "Harbir bending over the cot seemed to be transfixed. Jasbir also bending over the cot to place kaka in it, seemed to turn to stone. Betty turning from the window, towards the cot, stopped motionless in her tracks. All three pairs of eyes stared aghast at the child who was lying inside the crib. Kartar, the baby was certainly not sleeping. The royal cap that Betty had placed on the head was lying askew on the pillow. The blanket was half pulled off. His body was lying limp across the cot, arms and legs akimbo, palms wide open, unseeing eyes staring into nothingness. His mouth was a gaping hole caught in a silent scream and the lips were beginning to turn blues at the corners. There was no doubt about it—baby Kartar was dead." (Jaidka 154) This clearly shows that due to enmity and conspiracy Kartar Singh is killed in lieu of kaka the prince. Two attempts are made to kill Betty but she is escaped due to her good luck but Kartar Singh is murdered in place of kaka.

The murder of Kartar Singh was kept a secret by Maharaja: "No one was told the true story----that it was Kartar who had died and not kaka No one was told of how the Maharaja, with the rajmata, the Bryans and Attar's sisters had gone into a huddle of discovery of dead child; realizing the gravity of the situation and the fact that the innocent baby had lost his life because of he was mistaken for the prince." (Jaidka 156) To avoid further mishappenings they decided to change the course of action: "Kaka, the prince would take the place of Kartar and be sent away to safely with Jasbir and Harbir. However, it would be given out that the prince kakaji had suddenly died. Jasbir and Harbir would leave for Chail the very first day with kakaji. The word would be spread that they had gone to Amritsar so that Attar Singh could spend some time with his baby. For the sake of the

personal safety of the prince, misleading announcement would be made for public consumption.” (Jaidka 156) For the safety of the prince, the camouflaged identity would be remained as long as the Maharaja desired. This shows that Kaka the prince is also the victim of identity crisis and loss of his real home and parents.

When Florence, daughter of Bryans came to visit her parents, it created an obstacle for Betty’s identity. Their daughter Florence would join her parents in Chail. Her parents were anxious to know about her arrival. They remark: “After all, in the eyes of the public, the choti maharani was Florence, their daughter. So how could they now explain the appearance of another daughter called Florence.” (Jaidka 164) When this matter was discussed with the rajmata, she suggested: “She too suggested that it would be call her by another name. that would not be difficult, thought the Bryans, because their daughter was also known by her middle name, Gertrude, so calling her Gertie and introducing her as such would not difficult. Barring the rajmata and maharaja, no one knew that Betty was not Florence, their daughter, and so it would remain. The secret was to be maintained. The real Florence was on arrival, be installed as their older daughter.” (Jaidka 164).

The above passage is a perfect example of identity crisis. Betty is not Betty but Florence and is known as Bibi Harnam Kaur. Florence is not Florence but she is known as Gertie. Both Betty and Florence are the victims of loss of real identity. After a long negotiation it was decided that Betty would go back with her parents to England for her safety. A proposal got signed by the Majesty from Maharaja Rajinder Singh: “. . . Betty would leave Patiala and go back with her parents to their Bowood Estate in England; second that her child would not be told the secret of his parentage—he would grow up believing himself to be Attar’s son by his first wife who died of childbirth, there, the child would be brought up as a conservative Sikh---he would never shave his beard or cut his hair; and finally, he would never own a passport, never leave the Indian boarder

to go abroad, never try and seek his biological mother, even if he discovered the truth of his lineage.”(Jaidka 171) With all these conditions Betty went back to England with her mother. Further it was written and decided that Kaka would grow up as a Sikh: “Kaka, now known as Kartar, had the fair complexion and blue eyes of his mother. His appearance was very English. However, if he grew up as a Sikh, with a beard and turban, his English features would be hidden under all the hair and no one could recognize him as an English woman’s child.” (Jaidka 172) This clearly shows the both mother and son face the loss of their identity. Kaka, who had been living three years with Jasbir and Harbor, was abruptly taken away and handed over to Maharaja’s sister Bibi Bachtiar Kaur. The writer remarks: “As for Kaka. The little prince who was living the life of Kartar Singh, son of Attar Singh, he too was taken away from Jasbir and Harbir and handed over to Bibi Bachtiar Kaur, the Maharaja’s sister who bundled him up and took away to Lahore to bring him up under her care.” (Jaidka 178) It was done only because that both Jasbir and Harbir could not talk of Kartar Singh after their marriage. His custody was given to his aunt Bibi Bachtiar Kaur. This clearly shows that Kaka alias Kartar Singh has lost his real identity and is uprooted from his real roots at every step. He always lives with a borrowed identity.

When Betty had gone to England and Kaka with his aunt Bibi Bachtiar Kaur, Maharaja Rajinder Singh spent most of his time in drinking, hunting and in the company of women. One-day Maharaja went on hunting in the Bir with his men and was killed due to hatched conspiracy. After his death prime Bhupinder Singh, who was merely nine years old, appointed the Maharaja of Patiala palace. The writer has very rightly pointed out: “Badi Maharani emerged from the margins as the new rajmata while the old matriarch receded to the background . . . Maharaja Rajinder Singh’s rule passed the annals of history.” (Jaidka 198) History is replete with such heinous crimes where brothers kill brothers and sons kill fathers and wives kill their husbands for power and crown.

Attar Singh doubly became the victim of great loss of identity. When he came to meet Kartar Singh and revealed the hidden secret about him after the death of his would be mother. Attar Singh said: “Although you were being brought up in Lahore, I have always thought of myself as your father, said Attar Singh softly. There was a look of sadness on his face as he was transported back to the time when he had suddenly lost his first child.” (Jaidka 199) But soon he controlled himself and smiled again: “I lost my first child but gained another. You. I have always thought of you as my son. You Kanwar Kartar Singh are my legal heir, and we will let it remain so.” (Jaidka 199) These lines show the predicament of Attar Singh who loses both his real and legal son. Kaka further asked Attar Singh that how he allowed him to send Lahore. Attar Singh replied that he was sent Lahore for his safety. Attar Singh told him that he was one of the fourth guards appointed for his safety. Listening to this Kunwar Kartar Singh remarks: “Attar Singh told me that he was one of the fourth guardians appointed to take care of me. The first was, of course the Maharaja himself who would supervise my upbringing not from a distance. The second was my Baba, Jivan Singh of Lahore, Attar Singh was the third, fourth Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala.” (Jaidka 200) After telling everything to Kunwar Kartar Singh, Attar Singh went out of the room. Kunwar Kartar Singh was very perplexed to know this extraordinary tale and remarks:

I lay in bed staring at the ceiling fan for a long time before I fell into a fitful sleep, still musing over the extraordinary story I had heard. I mused over the various stages of my life: first a baby in the Maharaja’s palace, born to the chhoti maharani; second the supposed son of Attar Singh of Amritsar; third the adopted child of Jivan Singh of Lahore; and fourth the ward of Maharaja of Kapurthala . . . I was perhaps one of the extremely rare individuals in the world who had four different sets of parents at different stages of his life . . . I had changed hands almost as though I

were on unwanted burden that should be get rid of before it weighed them down. As though I were a ball of fire that would scorch my parents or guardians if they held me too long. It was like a game of passing the parcel, one set of guardians handing me over to the next. Washing their hands off me. Putting me out of their lives.” (Jaidka 201)

These lines clearly show the dilemma of Kartar Singh’s mind and also his happiness. He is treated as an outsider in his own home. He cannot decide what his real identity is. He is in great dilemma like Hamlet. He read the deed which was signed by Attar Singh and Maharaja Jagatjit Singh at Chail. Kartar Singh told that the clauses in this deed would shape his later life. He was in a deep sorrow and thought that five people had bartered his life. Kunwar Kartar Singh told about the clause of the deed. He remarks:

Clause 1 stated that chhoti maharani would be returned by the Maharaja of Patiala to Her Majesty the Queen of England. ‘Returned’ –as though she were a piece of furniture that had been borrowed by the state of Patiala. ‘Returned’ –as though she had been forcibly taken to Patiala against her will.

Clause 2 stated that the Rajkumar Richard Ram Rahim henceforth referred to as RRR, would not be told the secret of his parentage. RRR, who is known as Kunwar Kartar Singh, son of Attar Singh of Amritsar, would be formally adopted by Jivan Singh and Bachtiaar Kaur of Amritsar and he would be brought up as their child.

Clause 3 was a bit unexpected. It made it mandatory for RRR, alias Kunwar Kartar Sigh, to grow up as devout, keshdhari sardar. He would not cut his hair or beard and he would wear a turban all his life.

Clause 4 forbade RRR alias Kunwar Kartar Sigh to leave the Indian subcontinent. He was ever every try going to England; he was ever to seek his biological mother, the chhoti maharani Haram Kaur alias Beatrix.

Clause 5 stated that RRR's bringing and education would be looked after jointly by the Maharaja Jivan Singh, Attar Singh and Jagatjit Singh. Clause 6 dealt with financial arrangements for RRR's upkeep. It made it mandatory for the state of Patiala to allocate a certain sum for RRR's education and future prospects. (Jaidka 203-204)

These paragraphs clearly show that RRR alias Kaka alias Kunwar Kartar Singh doesn't have any control on his life; his real identity, his childhood, youth, his freedom to go abroad, to about his biological parents—are all snatched from him and he like an unwanted child, denied of everything.

After knowing everything from the diary and from other documents, Kunwar Kartar Singh with a note for Maharaja Jagatjit Singh from Attar Singh went to Kapurthala. There he met Maharaja Jagatjit Singh. He was greeted respectfully there and Maharaja asked that what he could do for him. Maharaja further asked him that Attar Singh had told him everything about his parentage. (Kunwar Kartar Singh) admitted everything and asked: "Can I see my mother? . . . 'My biological mother.'" (Jaidka 213) Listening to this Maharaja Jagatjit Singh shook his head and said that now he (Kunwar Kartar Singh) respected in society ' . . . as Attar Singh's son and Jivan's Singh's ward.'" (Jaidka 213) Further he warned him about the impending danger: "If the truth came out, out only would you endanger your life again, you would also be treated as a outcast, a half-breed . . . 'Half –English, half –sikh.'" (Jaidka 215) Here it shows that Kunwar Kartar Singh has no right to know about his real mother. He is the victim of identity crisis.

Further Maharaja Jagatjit Singh told him the importance of a family and society: ". . . you need to remember that in our society no individual is an island. We are, each of us, is a part of a larger family, a part of society . . ." (Jaidka 215) Maharaja Jagatjit Singh told him about Sikhism: "We are Sikhs as Sikhs we abide by our faith and our customs." (Jaidka 216) But Kunwar Kartar Singh had many questions regarding—to wear a turban and never cut his beard. Why they were

against me to go against religion. As soon as Jagatjit Singh listened to these words, he stopped Kunwar Kartar Singh and asked whether he saw his pictures as a baby. How he looked without turban and moustache in his childhood. He (Jagatjit Singh) remarks: “Yours eyes are blues. As an infant you had your mother’s clear pink skin. To all appearances, you are not Indian. It would not be in their interest for you to be recognised as a souvenir of the British Regency. The turban, the facial hair would serve as a camouflage.” (Jaidka 216)

Knowing all these facts about his identity, Kunwar Kartar Singh could not sleep. He remarks: “His eyes were bloodshot with lack of sleep; the hair which was normally hidden under his turban was, disheveled. The beard, usually rolled and tied neatly under the chin, was loose and long.” (Jaidka 217) Kunwar Kartar Singh scrutinized himself very closely in the mirror –his eyes and complexion. He was a teetotaler, but was drinking from the bottle of whisky: “. . . I who had been a teetotaler all along was now drinking at this early hour in the morning, a time for morning prayers, a time for close proximity with the higher powers. With the Gurus. With God.” (Jaidka 218).

The word (God) confused him and out of frustration he took out the sheaf of papers which was given to him by Attar Singh and read the clause that determined his life: “RRR alias Kunwar Kartar Singh to grow up as a devout keshdhari sardar. He will not cut his hair or beard and he will never leave the Indian subcontinent. He will ever never try going to England.” (Jaidka 218) Out of frustration he drank another swig from bottle, drew a knife and stared in the mirror and cut his hair with that knife like a razor. He remarks: “The knife in my right hand, I sat staring at my reflexion in the mirror. . . . I held my hair up with the left hand and brought the knife close to the roots Using knife like a razor, I slashed away at my hair. . . . Recklessly I hacked away at the hair on my head. . . . Then I turned to the bear. I slashed and scraped long and hard until it was all gone except for uneven stubble on the chin. And the moustache, too, was almost gone

as I did the best I could to get rid of an appearance I had nurtured carefully all my life.” (Jaidka 219) These lines show his extreme anger and frustration. He further remarks: “Who had the right to tell me how to live? Why should I allow an alien power to dictate the terms and conditions of my personal life?” (Jaidka 219) After cutting hair and beard, Kunwar Kartar Singh heaved a sigh of relief from his camouflaged identity. He transformed his old image to new. He remarks: “The ‘souvenir’ was now transformed. The blue eyes—although bloodshot—stood out in the face. The skin under the stubble glowed fair and pink.” (Jaidka 219) Kunwar Kartar Singh in a fit of anger smashed the mirror with the empty bottle of whisky. He smashed his old identity. He remarks: “The image of the ‘souvenir’ cracked into million pieces but I did not stop at that. I kept smashing the mirror as I struck it I called it names.” (Jaidka 219) Kunwar Kartar Singh further remarks: “. . . Mine is the story of one who is alive--- in the sense that I breathe, I am flesh and blood, I can feel, hear, speak, touch, and do whatever a living being is supposed to do. But in historical records, I am dead. The powers that ruled then have cosigned me to a living death. RRR is alive but he is dead, Kartar, who was dead, now lives on through me. Thou shall die but thou shall also live.” (Jaidka 226).

Kunwar Kartar Singh had many layers of his identity to tell. But the question was that who was there to listen to him. He remarks: “Do I go to tell them I am still alive? But where is the proof? Where is evidence? Who are witnesses? The concerned people are no longer around. There is no one to watch for me and I know I can never win my case so let me resign to my fate. This is how a ghost must feel. This death is life. The chill numbs my senses and I sink into nothingness. (Jaidka 226)

These lines clearly show Kunwar Kartar Singh predicaments of his loss of identity. He is in a jungle of uncleared paths. He is alive but at the same time he is dead. He has many pair of parents but nobody is with him legally. In a nutshell it

is said that Manju Jaidka's novel *Scandal Point* is dealt with various themes but the novelist focuses mainly on the loss of identity crisis of many characters. For example, Betty and Attar Singh becomes the victim of identity crisis but Kunwar Kartar Singh is the most sufferers of all the characters in the novels.

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Darshan Lal

Dr. Darshan Lal is working as an Associate Professor of English at DAV College (Lahore) Ambala City and has been serving since 2007. He has published papers in National and International Journals, edited books, Seminars and International Conferences. He did his PhD from Jamia Millia Islamia (A Central University) New Delhi in 2016. His areas of interest include Dalit Literature, Black Literature, Gender Studies, Diaspora, Partition Literature and Transgender Studies.