


Nina, a lecturer in English at a college in Delhi, dreads her thirtieth birthday. She is still unmarried, a condition much bewailed by her mother. Following her father’s death, she and her mother had been forced to live in reduced circumstances, first with her disapproving grandparents and now sharing one room. Their every move is noticed and commented on by others. Her mother arranges an astrologer reading and an arrangement. The differences between the propinquity of heat and noise in India and the cool, solitary and often isolated life in Canada are striking. The certainties of the codes of conduct and obligations to relations in India are contrasted with the ambiguous confusing lack of accountability that is associated with education in India and is a feature of heat and noise in India. The contrast is both symptomatic of the changes that are taking place in India and is a feature of heat and noise in Canada, adding to our understanding of the different cultures. Much of the book is about the adjustments, difficulties and misunderstandings in marriage. Couples may marry for love, for money, because of pregnancy, convenience, or by arrangement. The differences between the necessary adjustments between two people in this arranged marriage and any other seem slight, except that these two people are isolated from their traditional ways of behaving and have to find, or perhaps are enabled to find, their own solutions.

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We hope that journal readers enjoyed reading The Immigrant, and also discovering whether their opinion of this book matched that of our guest reviewer. In the October 2010 issue, the fiction book under scrutiny will be Private Life by Jane Smiley (318 pages, Faber & Faber, 2010, ISBN-13: 978-0-571-25874-1, £12.99, paperback). We also hope to review two other books that Journal readers might be interested in reading: Antigona and Me by Kate Clanchy (273 pages, Picador, ISBN-13: 978-0-330-40359-9, paperback) and Desert: Gobi and Daughters (Up on Outback of China) by Elizabeth Wallace (377 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1847396358, £7.99, paperback). We want to remind journal readers that if they would like to offer to write a complimentary fiction title of their own choosing then they should contact the Journal Editorial Office by e-mail (journal@fsrh.org) in the first instance with details of their nominated title.