

Interpreter of Maladies Final Assessment  
Interpret the Characters' Maladies and Lahiri's craft

For your final project on Jhumpa Lahiri's book of short stories,  
YOU are the Interpreter of Maladies. Your assignment:

Select 3 stories. For each:

1. Diagnose the malady in the story.  
(One or two concise sentences)
2. Identify the "symptoms" of concern; what problems do you see?  
(Embed at least one direct quotation)
  - a. Make sure you use textual quotations.
  - b. Point to specific "symptoms" that cause the malady.
3. Identify Lahiri's Techniques
  - a. Look at one rhetorical technique / literary device and explain how she develops that technique. For example, explain the power metaphor in *A Temporary Matter*.
  - b. Then, look at how that rhetorical technique / literary device contributes to the malady in the story.
4. Recommend a course of action for the characters in the story.  
This should cure the malady and/or make it go away.  
(2-3 concise sentences)
5. Recall a similar story / personal connection
6. Optional / EC: Include a piece of art or original picture that you think is somehow related to this story and explain the art and its connection to the story

Final Analysis should be typed and in 12 pt font.

Assignment Value: 100 points

You will have at least 3 In-Class Writing Days

**Due Date: Wednesday, March 20th, 2019 by 11:59p**

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*A Temporary Matter*

Diagnosis

[What metaphorical 'illness' or 'malady' is the character(s) struggling with? Explain.]

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Symptoms of concern:

[Explain "symptoms" and provide examples of the characters' issues and problems. Embed 1 direct quotation.]

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The Techniques:

[Which of Lahiri's techniques provide clues and evidence that emphasize this malady? Embed 1 direct quotation.]

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Recommended Course of Action

[What should the characters do to remedy their situation? Is it curable or terminal?]

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A Similar Story:

[When have you observed a similar situation - a metaphorical malady & potential recovery? Describe the situation and what happened. Connect to the story.]

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Piece of Art/Original Photo and explanation (Optional)

[Find and/or create art to represent the story and explain]

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	20	17	15	13	0
	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Further Progress	Needs Significant Progress	Not Evident

<p><b>Diagnosis and Symptoms of Concern</b>                  Diagnose malady and provide examples of the characters' issues and problems. Embed 1 direct quotation.</p>					
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<p><b>Techniques</b> Thoughtful identification and analysis of author's techniques. Integration of Textual Examples and Quotations.</p>					
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<p><b>Course of Action:</b>                  Thoughtfully proposed remedy for malady.</p>					
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<p><b>Connection:</b> Discussion connects elements and themes of stories to outside examples</p>					
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<p><b>Mechanics / Voice:</b> Writing flows smoothly, Transitions are clear, structure is sound, and writing is carefully edited.</p>					
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**COMMENTS:**

**Optional Art & Discussion** \_\_\_\_\_ (up to 2 pts / story)

## “Every Little Hurricane” Pathology Report

### **Diagnosis: [1-2 sentences]**

In “Every Little Hurricane,” it is evident that Victor and his family suffer from many maladies. We observe poverty, alcoholism, lack of control, anger, and violence.

### **Symptoms of Concern** [Embed 1 direct quotation]

The story “Every Little Hurricane” tells the story of nine-year old Victor and the challenges that he and his family face in 1976. In the story, we learn that Victor watches his uncles fight during a party, that his father cries “huge, gasping tears. Indian tears” (5), and that Victor deeply loves his parents despite the challenges of reservation life and being an Indian. In this story, Victor and his family are faced with a hurricane- a natural disaster that symbolizes the many circumstances beyond their control that enter their lives routinely. Victor’s family faces formidable challenges throughout the narrative, maladies small and large. Specific metaphorical symptoms include small fights, bouts of anger, and violence, but also major challenges such as alcoholism and poverty. Alexie’s story helps us see that in the end, the family comes out okay; they survey damage and acknowledge that life does not look the same, but they still gather together in the end: “The hurricane that fell out of the sky in 1976 left before sunrise, and all the Indians, the eternal survivors, gathered to count their losses” (11). This story captures the idea that we both suffer and survive together. In the end, though, Alexie reminds the reader that the sun will still come up the next day and that our survival depends on our ability to be ‘eternal survivors.’

### **Technique** [Embed 1 direct quotation]

Sherman Alexie uses several techniques in “Every Little Hurricane.” First, The hurricane in this story serves as a metaphor to describe the way that life’s difficulties come at us in unexpected ways. Our personal ‘hurricanes’ may come on as small winds first, then grow and become near disasters, but they finally retreat and leave us with a world that is forever changed. A second technique is Alexie’s use of names. He gives the title character the name Victor, a name which initially seems like a fairly normal American name. As we read about Victor’s experience, challenges, and struggles, we realize in the end that his name represents the way that he has survived – this hurricane and probably many others. And the name “Victor” literally means one who has won, and we associate ‘victory’ with both winning a game but also overcoming, being strong, and surviving whatever we are faced with.

## “Every Little Hurricane” Pathology Report

### **Recommended Course of Action** [1-2 sentences]

While Victor and his family cannot cure the poverty and alcoholism rampant on their reservation, Victor’s must continue to fight the contagiousness of these maladies. Victor’s first step is to observe and recognize what has brought his family and relatives down and try to avoid falling into the same traps of alcoholism and violence as a means to numb his pain.

### **A Similar Case Study**

At first, “Every Little Hurricane” seemed like a story that was about an Indian reservation, alcoholism, and violence. On most days, my experience does not echo the life of Victor and his family at all. However, once I thought more carefully about the experiences the narrator shares, I realize that Victor and I are not so dissimilar. We both care deeply about our parents and our families, but we also sometimes feel uncomfortable about the world around us. Victor watches his dad struggle to with money and he watches his uncles fight, “slugging each other with such force that they had to be in love.” When I read this story, I think about the ways that my mom and I fought, especially when I was younger. I was so angry I felt I could scream “I hate you” but somehow I knew that she would still love me and I would still love her no matter what I said. I believe that “Every Little Hurricane” is partly about this comfort family can bring us, even when the world feels like it is swirling around in uncontrollable ways. In the end of the story, the hurricane departs and Victor and those on the reservation assess the damage from this storm. Ultimately, the story talks about how the survivors “gathered to count their losses,” and I think about the times that I fought with my mom, my sisters, and my friends in the past. I find myself remembering a huge fight that two of my friends and I had at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp when I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. It was, of course, over a boy that two of us liked- and I’m sure he didn’t really even notice either of us too much. But our fight centered on being noticed by him and at the time it felt like a giant hurricane. We stood in the gray, concrete shower area of the bathroom and screamed at each other. The counselor came in and tried to settle us down. Ultimately, after the storm of screams, we went on and even laughed about some of our reactions and our obsession with John Cowen. I can’t believe I even remember his name, but I think the reason I remember is because my friends and I made it through the storm that he, unwittingly, caused. We remain friends today, partly because we made it through that experience, surveyed the damage, and moved on. What I realize, as I reread the final line of “Every Little Hurricane,” is that we survive storms together and that is what is important- that people gather together and suffer and survive through difficulties and loss together. And even though my own challenges do not meet or match Victor’s, I can see that his need to feel close to others and his ability to survive is what we all do in small and large ways. What’s important is that we come out of every little hurricane alive.

## “Every Little Hurricane” Pathology Report

### **Related Image** [Optional / Extra Credit]

The image “Landscape with Steer” by Jackson Pollock (1936-7) echoes the struggle of Victor and his family as they battle the many maladies present on the reservation. This image captures a landscape with dark, angry redness infringing on the steer’s space. Just as the hurricane moves onto the reservation and ravages Victor’s life, this steer’s land and safe space will be forever altered by the storm of red that threatens to destroy the land. The painting captures a scene of natural disaster and the fact that we are sometimes out of control of our environment. In “Every Little Hurricane,” Victor and his family also struggle against conditions that are out of their control.

