**Character Arcs and Bios**

**Alisha (18):**

Smart, funny, and chronically doubtful, Alisha has a lot of dreams, the most important being she wants to be a fashion designer. Where is she always at in her spare time? In the very back of the art room surrounded by busts and sewing needles. Her grandmother fears the starving-artist route and prefers for Alisha to be practical. Out of all the hurtful things her grandma can say, insulting her fashion creations is the #1 worst thing!

Despite all the issues Alisha can get into with the people in her life, most of the time (in some roundabout way) it is Alisha that gets in her own way. We can resonate with Alisha because she represents the quote “we are our own greatest enemy.”

Her cousin is visiting from India. She feels responsible for him acclimating to the US. She has this weird relationship with him where she doesn’t want to be seen or associated with him whatsoever but would donate a kidney for him if he needed.

 

Alisha feels deeply misunderstood not only at home but in the world. She has yet to confront her issues of abandonment, poor mental health, and confidence. Who is Alisha? Well don’t ask Alisha because she won’t know. She confuses herself through her perpetual all-or-nothing/black-and-white mentality - sometimes she’s a beast that stands up for what she believes in and sometimes she can barely roll out of bed.

Alisha is still reeling from a heartbreak. Weirdly her heartbreaks are always friendship breakups. She cannot sit still if she knows someone may be upset with her. Right now, it’s Rhonda and Joy. High school’s most adored, and public enemy #1 for Alisha. It didn’t always used to be like this though… there was a strong friendship in the past.

Alisha wants to be loved, a part of something, and included. This need drives her to people please her classmates until she is tired! Her goal in school is to get into a group. Everyone seems to be a part of something, and all Alisha wants is to be a part of something too. Little does she know, she is surrounded by people that love her. She may be overlooking the safe haven her family can be for her.

Alisha loves her family so much, however, does not know how to get closer to them. She has lived with them in the same house for so many years, yet she feels nobody in her family truly *knows* her. Like a lot of families, her family has a rug and things get swept under it. It’s a big rug.

Her relationship with her grandmother is rocky… at best. It was not always like this, though. Once upon a time Alisha was writing poems about how Avani was her second mom. Oh, where did all the time go?

In many ways, Avani does serve as a second mom to Alisha, especially since her mother, Janani, is becoming more focused on her work.

That brings us to Janani. Alisha would describe her mother Janani as a Laissez-faire leader. Suave, laid back, and in her own world. Sometimes Alisha craves more attention from Janani, but shhhhh that’s a secret.

Alisha really treasures her relationship with her father. He seems to always say the right things, be there when she is down, and well he’s just awesome! He supports her in everything she does and is not helicopter-y like her mom and grandma. Over the course of the series we see Alisha’s preexisting notions about her father crumble away as she discovers the truth about him.

Alisha is learning that things are not always how they seem. She will figure out how to deal with sacrifice, sadness, and facing her feelings. She will figure out a way to have it all (we hope) her family fixed, her dreams, and everything she ever wanted. It is the aim that through the supernatural body swapping between Alisha and Avani, Alisha will transform.

**Avani (81):** Avani is an old grandma. She is religious, cultured, and is always right (or so she thinks). She lives with her daughter and grandchildren. Day to day, she gets lonely. While everyone is off doing their own things (the kids at school and Janani working), she can’t help but ask herself why people don’t even pretend to want to spend time with her? Why? Avani knows deep down her overthinking, micromanaging, and controlling nature can be difficult to deal with, but has it really alienated her family away from her? That can’t be right though, despite being controlling, family is family… *right*? You should always respect your elders because they mean well and they’re doing it for the greater good…*right*?... not always. Avani comes to learn this as her days on Earth start to get numbered. Her slip-ups are getting worse, and Janani begins to get over her antics.

When Avani realizes Janani is looking into nursing homes, she is shocked. She did not ever think it would get to this point. Yikes!



Avani’s life is monotonously productive. Being old is the last thing Avani wants to be because her work ethic practically defines her. She cannot stand being in an old body that creaks, doesn’t move the same anymore, and gets tired quickly. The tiredness of her body just doesn’t pair well with her mind, a mind that moves a mile a minute. At 75, she’d manage to start her day by 5 AM, cook three dishes of her family’s favorite meals, and take the dog for a walk.

Oh! And another thing. The last thing Avani will do is be a burden. Growing up, her family was very poor and had to take on a lot of responsibilities as a child and young woman. This led her to be hyper-independent and self-sufficient.

Avani is old-fashioned. She really, really hates how the next generations are turning out. From her daughter to her children, they are all becoming lazier and more tuned out in her opinion.

Despite anything, Avani is fixed in her morals. Like many old people, she is STUBBORN! She was the one who discovered Dev was unfaithful. Avani is stuck between protecting her daughter and saving face from a divorce ‘tainting’ the family name and respect. She also does not want Janani to get hurt finding the truth out about Dev. It’s all kind of… screwed up. Avani’s stubbornness makes the toughest situations even tougher.

**Janani (47):** Janani is Alisha’s mom. She is THE social butterfly. If you need anything, she knows someone. Maybe not *the* someone you need, but the friend of that someone. She does not believe in sitting still and thinking. Thinking leads to overthinking. Overthinking leads to sadness. Why be sad when you can do literally anything else?

Janani fell in love with Dev in India when she was in her early 20’s. They moved to the US, had Alisha, and that was that. That became her life. She used to love chemistry and even hoped to be a scientist but that went out the window. Her previous dreams boiled down into her settling down as a pharmacist, selling Viagra pills every hour.

Her marriage is fine… or so she thought. The rift between her mother and her husband caused her husband to suddenly move out. She wants things to smooth over but is scared to jolt her mother. She’s been out of it recently, forgetting the stove is on, putting tea cups in the wrong cupboard, etc.



She communicates with her husband often, although she gets the sense, he feels her life is full of meaningless ‘distractions.’ It doesn’t matter what he thinks, though. Her life is fine. What’s to complain about? Alas, everyone needs their coping mechanisms. Janani’s is film. Television. Dumb reality or intricate mystery – either works. Why smoke cigarettes when you can binge watch episodes till your eyes shake?! When TV isn’t enough to do the job, Janani can get mad. Really mad.

Janani loves Alisha. So much. She just doesn’t understand some of the things that makes Alisha sad. Alisha just needs to grow up already!

Janani will hopefully come to learn that people are different. Some people would like to curl up in a ball and cry rather than binge watch The Office for the 67th time. Crazy, right?!?

Janani will also learn that Avani is not who she thought she was. \*Gasp\*.

**Dev (52):** Dev is Alisha’s father. He came to the U.S. very early on upon the death of his own father. He believes there is a right and wrong way to do everything. He got married because that’s what you do. Had children because that’s what you do! He works a corporate job that eats away at him and makes him stressed. He loves to sing, play his late dad’s harmonica, and can’t wait to retire. He gets into arguments with Janani often. He doesn’t understand the pointless things she fills her life up with. More than Janani, though, the bickering with Avani… LORD!!



He’d smiled at the arrival of Janani’s parents and niece (Alisha’s cousin) and was glad there was more family in the house but over time, there is bound to be a clash and Dev can only reel in his real thoughts for so long. He was an only child and grew up in an orthodox village in India so raising a daughter in the U.S. is bound to have a steep learning curve. Being unfaithful in a marriage… an even steeper learning curve!

**Vic (17):** Vic is Alisha’s cousin. He was raised all his life in India and gave that up to stay with his aunt in the American suburban life. He wants the bright future and education that the cushy private school in Michigan can bring. His love for science spawned since he was a young child. Growing up in India, he was around orthodox and religious people, and began questioning ideals from a young age. When he was in middle school he’d ask his mother – if God is real, why are there so many children starving and going hungry every day? Vic believes in science. Science is facts. Facts are the truth. We see this belief get challenged because of the body swap.



Coming to the US, Vic was scared. He and Alisha were very close when she’d visit India in the summers. As they got older, they drifted apart. Prior to going to school with Alisha, he expected the two to frolic around the school hallways, conquering all the AP classes and making it into the Ivy Leagues side by side. Instead, Alisha does not give him the time of day. Seeing this, he became a little more reserved and scouted out Kevin, his best nerd friend ever.

Over time, his relationship with both Alisha and Avani strengthens.