

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ROSIE AND RAJU IN R.K.NARAYAN'S THE GUIDE: A CRITICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

R. K. Narayan's novel *The Guide* portrays the live-in relationship of Raju and Rosie. The subject of individual relationship has always been very dominant in R. K. Narayan's novels. The paper aims to study how the uncertainty and suppression faced by Rosie resulted in a relationship of mutual benefit between Rosie and Raju in the novel *The Guide*. Raju and Rosie are deeply engaged in a relationship out of wedlock for the fulfillment of their emotional, physical and economical desires.

Key Words: Live-in relationship, incompatibility, pursuit, devadasi, materialistic.

Introduction:

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayanaswami (R. K. Narayan) 10 October, 1906 – 13 May, 2001- was born in Madras now known as Chennai. The winner of Sahitya Academy Award, R.K.Narayan is one of the greatest Indian writers in English. He was one among the remarkable trio of Indian English writing, Mulk Raj Anand(1905-2004) and Raja Rao(1909-2006) being the other two who showcased their extraordinary talents in Indian English novel writing. R.K.Narayan is regarded as the most supreme and influential Indian English writer who ruled the Indian English literary world for more than six decades. His novels are widely read not only in India but abroad as well. His literary creations contain a series of short stories and novels about common men and their relations in an imagined township in India named Malgudi. He created many literary works during his life as: *Swami and Friends* 1935, *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937), *The English Teacher* (1945), *Mr. Sampath* (1948), *The Financial Expert* (1952), *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man-*

Eater of Malgudi (1961), *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), *The Painter of Signs* (1977), *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983), *Talkative Man* (1986), *The World of Nagaraj* (1990) and *Grandmother's Tale* (1992).

R. K. Narayan won several awards during his literary career. He got his first award in 1958, the Sahitya Akademi Award for his famous novel *The Guide*. And received the Film fare Award for the best story of *The Guide* when a Hindi movie was made on the book directed by Vijay Anand. He received the Padma Bhushan during the Republic Day honours in 1964. In 1980, he was awarded the AC Benson Medal by the (British) Royal Society of Literature, of which he was an honorary member. In 1982 he was elected an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Honorary doctorate was awarded to him by the University of Leeds in 1967, the University of Mysore in 1976 and Delhi University in 1973. Narayan was also nominated to the Indian Parliament for a period of six-year in 1989, for his contributions to Indian literature. In 2001, a year



before his passing away, he was awarded with the Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian honour in India.

The Guide, written in 1958, the golden era of Indian novel writing, is surely a masterpiece by R K Narayan. The Guide, one of the best novels in English language, became a best seller in the West as well as in India. The enormous success of the novel resulted in film version by Vijay Anand in Hindi and Pearl S. Buck in English. The Hindi Film Guide was a great commercial success and it won all the major awards at the Film fare. The character of Raju was played by Dev Anand and Rosie by Waheeda Rehman. The movie doesn't fail to entertain the audience even today. Selfless sacrifice and Purposeful love are two major themes of the novel. Raju, the protagonist remains at the limelight for both good and bad reasons. He pays no heed to the so called social and moral norms when it comes to Rosie. The whole society including his own widowed mother stands against him but he turns a blind eye on the acuteness of the erratic situation.

Narayan's writing technique is very modest and he has written about the intricacies of the Indian society without compromising on his characteristic simplicity to conform to the trends in Indian fiction writing. He portrays various themes in his literary works including The Guide. The concept of Live in relationship or Cohabitation has been depicted in The Guide. "Cohabitation" is an arrangement where two people who are not married live together. They often involve a romantic or sexually intimate relationship on a long term or permanent basis. It is becoming widely popular in western countries although it is not openly approved of in our society.

Rather than getting married, couples cohabit for a variety of reasons. They may want to test their

compatibility before they commit to a legal union. In The Guide the protagonists Raju and Rosie starts living like married couple to fulfill their physical, emotional and financial desires.

OBJECTIVES

The present paper is an honest attempt to attract the attention of the readers and lovers of literature towards the importance of Rosie-Raju relationship. Rosie and Raju are the most popular characters in the novel titled "The Guide" written by R.K.Narayan. The research scholar further explains that literature preaches us the actual meaning and sublimity of life.

ROSIE

Rosie, the protagonist of the novel "The Guide" by R.K. Narayan is a multifaceted personality. Her transformation from being a devadasi to an M.A. in economics is indeed remarkable. Despite being rejected by her husband for infidelity, she becomes a successful professional dancer by her dedication, patience and hard work, yet like any other typical Indian woman, and she regrets her failed marriage. R.K. Narayan illustrates the character Rosie as a typical Indian woman who loves her husband notwithstanding his every fault and always feels proud of her husband. Though she belongs to a family of dancers, she is highly educated and is influenced by her husband and her background. She is presented in the novel as a beautiful dancer, of the "Devadasi" variety of temple dancers. In South and parts of East India, a devadasi or Jogini is a girl "dedicated" to worship and to the service of a deity or a temple.

Rosie is the daughter of a dancer and hence she belongs to a lower strata of the society. From a very early age, she was very fond of and



passionate about dancing. Later on, she attains fame and popularity as a dancer by performing on stage. She is a highly educated woman with independent mind and thinking. She is very mature but at times she behaves like a child. She is a dreamer and loves to be in a world of fantasy. She is not materialistic. For her money has never been a concern, she dances because dance is her life. She wanted to be a dancer in pursuit of art and not in pursuit of money. She is a perturbed soul and suffers from an inferiority complex because of her birth in a lower caste of the society. Rosie is a highly ambitious woman. She married Marco not out of love but because of his social status. Marco is a highly successful scholar. But, due to her devotion and hard work, Rosie attains a greater fame and recognition as a dancer than her husband gets as a scholar.

Rosie is the young, beautiful and charming wife of Marco. She is a born dancer. She has all the qualities that a man seeks for in a perfect wife. But, despite all her qualities, her marriage has been like a curse in disguise to her as Marco is totally engaged in his career and is totally lackadaisical and unemotional to her. She feels neglected by Marco. Marco often forgets his duty as a husband towards his beautiful young wife. She is very passionate about dancing but her husband does not approve of and allow her to dance.

Rosie is a typical traditional Indian wife. Her husband is like God to her. Marco ridicules her dancing skills and calls it street acrobatics and compares it to monkey dance. In spite of all these humiliations she continues to be his wife.

RAJU

Raju is the protagonist of the story. He was born in the fictional town of Malgudi. He belongs to a

middle class family. He lives with his mother as his father died when Raju was very young. Raju became the only bread earner in his family at a very young age after his father's death. But, Raju was very smart, he did not stick to his family business only. He grows his father's shop and side by side he started performing his role as a guide because Railways always fascinates him. Soon he became very popular among the tourists with the name "Railway Raju".

He is very smart, but has never attended school. He has an exceptional quality to find what people are looking for and satisfy them by providing them with what they desire for. He is a slick and has a quick mouth. He often deceives people and conveys false information to achieve whatever he wants.

"Railway Raju", is a fascinating character in RK Narayan's "The Guide" and the central theme of this novel is his transformation from a rogue and scoundrel and conman, to a spiritual Guru or sage and 'sadhu' or saint. Raju is a waggish, devoted, sincere, self-serving, sinner, redeemer, fake saint and finally a godman who has the ability to change according to the demands of the situation. His career is marked by a series of role play. He is a vendor, guide, and lover of Rosie and friend of Marco, mentor, director and business manager of Rosie in her career as a dancer, deceiver, jail bird, fake swami ji and finally a true sanyasi.

At times he seems to be a corrupt guy who is wasteful and uses short-cuts to achieve his goals; and at times he seems to be a sensitive person who encourages his love to live to her potential, who tries to keep her happy, who gives up his life to maintain the faith of simple villagers who considered him to be a spiritual person. He never gives up an opportunity to impress people, to win



them over, to win their favours and good opinions. It is this quality which makes him take up the challenge of the villagers in their plight, when they need rain. So, he goes off to the ruined old temple on the cliff of the hill and sits there and meditates, actually trying to be what he is pretending to be that is aspiritual guru in reality, too, to provide genuine help.

MARCO

Marco is a highly successful and intellectual scholar who is so engrossed in his study of rocks and caves that he has no time to attend to theemotional and physical needs of his wife. He believes that, "If aman has to have peace of mind, it is best that he forget the fairsex". He has excessive passionfor his intellectual pursuit but he never approves of Rosie's dancing skills. The sedentary rocks appease Marco but the living things around fail to appeal him. There is a complete contrast of interests and likings between the couple.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RAJU AND ROSIE

Rosie and Raju met and soon became friends. Once during her visit to Mempi Hills, when Rosie is alone in the hotel room while her husband Marco is away researching caves in the Mempi forest, Raju becomes a sympathetic audience to Rosie's performance. When they meet, Rosie is married to Marco. It, however, does not take long for Raju to infer that there is no love lost between the two. Raju became sympathetic to Rosie. Rosie is married to Marco, but it is not a happy marriage. Her husband, Marco, is a busy man. He is mostly gone out on archaeological studies. There is no compatibility between Marco and Rosie. Rosie's obsession with dance and Marco's indifferent attitude towards her dancing skills is one of the

underlying factors of their marital incompatibility. She feels dejected and heartbroken at Marco's trivializing her artistic inclinations. Rosie gets frustrated when Marco forbids her to dance .Raju encourages her love for dance and to pursue her dream of becoming a great professional dancer. Marco's sheer neglect of Rosie encourages Raju, the guide, to make undue advances towards Rosie. Raju, who is desperately trying to impress Rosie, thus gets the opportunity and time to woo Rosie. Had Rosie been in a happy marriage, Raju's attempts would not have made any difference, but her failed marriage led her to get involved in a romantic relationship with the disarming Raju. Her affinities to Raju breaks her already strained marriage .Eventually, Rosie begins to dance, which affords Raju his favorite thing..... Money. Blinded by Raju's love, Rosie moved in with Raju and his mother defying all cultural traditions to fulfill her physical and creative desires. Raju's mother didn't think it appropriate that Rosie lived with them without Rosie getting a formal divorce from her husband and she leaves them.

Unlike Raju, Rosie does not care too much about the money. Rosie is an "artist" for whom dance is a passion. She dances because she loves it and because she is very good at it. She is a great dancer who is able to get a decent job as a dancer and earn a handsome income. For her, dance is her life. She does not dance for the money, it is simply a part of her identity.

Rosie is drawn to Raju because Raju makes her feel that she is a great dancer. He makes her realize her long cherished dream of becoming a great Bharat Natyam dancer. Raju being an excellent young charmer, devotes his time and effort to bring her dancing abilities to accomplish a state of fulfillment.



Raju becomes Rosie's stage manager and his confidence on her transforms her into a different person altogether and hence Rosie feels attracted towards Raju irresistibly. Interest in Raju is not out of adulterous inclination but out of hunger for individual fulfilment as a dancer. She becomes Raju's lover, but being a traditional Hindu woman, deep in her heart she still has a soft corner for her husband Marco.

When Marco came to know about the closeness between Rosie and Raju, he became very disturbed and didn't talk to her and completely ignored her presence. She sincerely apologizes to Marco. Rosie explains to Raju, "I followed him, day after day, like a dog-waiting on his grace". She tries to convince her husband and bears all the insults. But Marco reacts by categorically disowning his wife. He comments, "I'm trying to forget..... even the earlier fact that I ever took a wife you are free to go and do what you please." This incident shows her tremendous tolerance power and her optimistic attitude. She is basically kind and loving towards her husband. She admires the fact that he gives her freedom, security and does not kill her for her betrayal. At the end, the fact that she cuts his picture from *The Illustrated Weekly* and pastes it on her mirror proves that she is emotionally devoted to him.

Rosie becomes a great dancer and changes her name to Nalini. Once she became an illustrious artist on her own strength and led a fuller life devoted to her art, she was surrounded by her co-artists, but Raju being a very possessive person did not like Rosie spending a lot of time with her co-artists. This results in differences between Raju and Rosie.

Initially, Raju provides a new lease of life to Rosie by encouraging her to pursue her passion and eventually he gets romantically interested in

Rosie. But later he becomes dependent on her emotionally as well as financially. Once he sets Rosie up as a great dancer, he indulges in luxurious living. When money starts pouring in, Raju's treacherous attitude and possessive instinct detaches Rosie from him. He could never manage to put anything ahead of his greed. When Rosie disapproves his constant demand for money, Raju forges Rosie's signature on some documents sent by Marco and is jailed. When Rosie learns about Raju's arrest, she comments: "I felt all along you were not doing right things. This is Karma." Rosie releases him after three days imprisonment on a bail of ten thousand rupees. Now she asks Raju to forget her. She never comes back for Raju and settled in Madras. By now Rosie realizes that she needed neither Marco nor Raju for her fulfilment as a dancer, and she eventually chose her independence.

Apparently Rosie's pursuit for life is physical, emotional and intellectual, not touching at all the spiritual chords. Unlike Raju who was more materialistic, her pursuit is realistic, practical and pragmatic. She acquires a greater degree of self-realization and actualization after the separation from her husband Marco, and in the company of Raju, who brings a sense of excitement, warmth and motivation to her otherwise suppressed life. She attains a great amount of fulfillment of her pursuit when she achieves popularity and prosperity as a dancer under the name of Nalini. Finally we can conclude that both the protagonists of the novel Raju and Rosie live with each other only to fulfill their physical and economical desires.

SUMMING UP

To sum up the research scholar comes to the point that Rosie is also true to her lover. In spite of the forgery, Rosie does not desert Raju. Though Rosie



comes to know about every treacherous and fraud activity of Raju, she compromises with the situation. Instead of punishing Raju for his deceit, she is determined, like a true beloved, to spend every penny that she is arranging a capable defense for Raju although she has earlier decided to give up dancing as a profession. She signs fresh dancing contracts to raise more money for this purpose.

In fact, her dignified and noble behavior brings out our sympathy. She embodies the “Feminine Principle” of ideal woman-hood. She is religious by nature as she believes in Goddess Saraswati and has the bronze image of Nataraja in her office. Her success doesn't get to her head as she remains a down to earth person even after becoming very successful in her dancing career. Once Raju became very upset because Rosie spent lot of time with different artists and not with him. He came to her and said that these artists come to her because they are inferior to her. She replies to him saying that she doesn't believe in superior and inferior. She doesn't discriminate people on the basis of their financial status. On one hand when Raju prefers to meet people who are very rich and influential in the society Rosie doesn't care much about these people. Being herself an artist she respects art and likes to be in the company of artist and other music lovers. To conclude, we can say that Narayan's humor does not result from distortion, exaggeration. It shows an observation of the common man weakness, follies and fables. His humor is varied and all pervasive. The

reminiscence of Raju makes the novel realistic as well as suspenseful. The flashback technique arouses the curiosity and the interest of the reader. The readers never get bored and are always on the looks out about what comes next. It also proves Narayan's skill as a born story teller and a curiosity narrator.

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