

A House for Mr. Biswas (Quest for Identity and Freedom)

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Abstract- A House For Mr. Biswas (1961) written by V.S. Naipaul is a masterpiece and an autobiographical novel inspired by his own past .The story revolves around the protagonist of the novel Mr Mohan Biswas who is an Indo-Trinidadian born under several unfavourable conditions inauspiciously has lived a difficult life, but at the end, has accomplished what has been most important to him. The story basically tells the readers about discontinues struggles from his birth to death who is also believed of being the unlucky child of the house born with six fingers, as he grows up becoming a man he struggles in search for his identity, search for his purpose in life and a dream to have his own house and living freely.

As a married man Mr. Biswas and his wife Shama live in Hanuman House with Shama's mother and multitudes of her relatives all residing under same roof but he gains no respect there as well and becomes a clown ,a buffon ,a rebel, and is constantly in a conflict with one or the other family member of the house because he is not a financially stable man compared to other members of the house so he is always dominated by the male members of the house. This is when his struggle and frustration starts when he is not able to own a house for his wife and his children despite of his daily struggles of being financially stable and gaining respect in the society and among his wife's family members who constantly dominate him.

This paper focuses on the character quests for identity and its lifetime struggles in gaining respect in the society and living up to his dream of owning a house where he and his wife and his family can live peacefully and freely. The story also depicts the daily struggles of an individual manlike Mr. Biswas who are tied by the norms of the society and goes through many strugglesfrustration, pain,innerconflicts in search for pursuing their own identity and dream to live up to the status of the society and V.S Naipaul explores this idea throughout the novel by his character Mr. Mohun Biswas.

Key words-House, Identity, Struggle, Man &The Society

Introduction- The novel begins with Mr Mohun Biswas an Indo-Trinidad (based on V.S. Naipaul's father, Seepersad Naipaul) born in rural Trinidad and Tobago(southernmost island country in the Caribbean) to Hindu family whose parents are Brahmin and have lot of faith in

prayers and performing rituals like any other Hindu family, and being born to a hindu family he was considered unlucky as he was born with an extra finger. A pundit prophesies predicts that this child would bring bad luck to the family, as a child, Mr Biswas was indirectly and unintentionally responsible for the death of his father, and his family is eventually broken apart as a result the prophecy seems to begin to fulfil itself and he basically becomes a child of circumstances, and his life becomes more or less accidental throughout which also shows the religious belief of an Indian society and his life becomes more or less accidental. In his job as a sign painter for the tulsistore, he is attracted towards a woman named Shama so he decides to write her a note which her family interprets as a love letter and within a short period of time they are engaged and married to each other.

The plot develops after the marriage of Mohun Biswas and Shama as because being a married man responsibilities grows with a growing family to fulfil all their needs and getting a status in the society becomes the top most priority because as long you are single alone even if you earn mere amount of money doesn't matter but when a individual gets married responsibilities and wants grow from time to time. So as a married man the actual struggle of Mr Mohun Biswas begins when Mr. Biswas and his wife Shama live in Hanuman House with Shama's mothers and multitudes of her relatives and he is constantly dominated by the other male members of the house as Mr. Biswas doesn't hold a position as compared to theirs. So he is always pulled back by others due to which he is constantly in conflict with one or the other family member of the house. Eventually the offense is so much that he is sent from the house to run a store from one of the family properties. Everything goes fine until Shama his wife becomes pregnant and he starts facing financial difficulties because of the growing family needs due to which he starts making ill-advised decisions that result in getting him deeper into debts, but soon he is offered a position as a driver of the Tulsi's sugar estates, and he accepts the job under his wife coaxing him to accept the offer.

On the sugar estate, the family lives in a building shared with eleven other families, seeing the scenario of the house Mr. Biswas wishes to have his own house where he and his family could live peacefully and he becomes impatient to build a house but he is financially not stable that he can afford to buy a house for his family but he starts working on his dream bit by bit but the dream of having his own house diminishes as low substandard supplies quality of quality materials used in the house was blown away during a storm.

His house, his growing family, and his job Mr. Biswas begins to worry and those worries results him in getting anxieties, and those anxieties becomes his biggest fears and he is completely broken and divested as his dream is just broken but he once again rises up and leaves his family behind to make another attempt in his life he goes to a Port of Spain and finally establishes himself as an individual and decides to build another house as usual this decision also turns out to be Mr. Biswas bad decisions the house catches fire and is totally destroyed Mr. Biswas again goes back to the trauma.

Soon pulled out when he is offered a new job as a Community Welfare Officer with better pay and the job also provides him with a car and he achieves a new status in the house however the status turns out to be temporary which leads to many conflicts within the family. Mr. Biswas looks for a place to live holding no hope this time but he is approached by a man who wants to sell his house and Mr. Biswas agrees to make the purchase, but as usual this turns out to be another incident of bad judgement as the house has more problems than he realized, he and his family is again disheartened. This time they all work as an family to make the house liveable and also enjoy the same time working and putting effort equally on the house making it their own. Mr. Biswas loses his and job because the Community Welfare Department is abolished, and now the worries return back as he has taken so much of loan more than his income. He eventually gets lots of anxieties which results him to series of heart attacks ultimately dies.

Although he dies but he leaves behind a house that will shelter his family for as long as they live and he has persuaded his dream of having his own house though he may not be able to live his dream but he has actually accomplished what he wanted from his life that is his own house for him and himself.

Examination-Vidyadhar Suraj Prasad Naipaul, one of the best-known writers in English today is himself a product of post-imperialist society better known for his controversial material in his travelogue than for his novels but in 1998, the Modern Library ranked *A House For Mr Biswas* number 72 on the list of the best English-language novels of the 20th c also it was included as the best novels from 1923 to 2005 and this novel is considered to be Naipaul

carriers best play which bought him lot of fame and name to his carrier .The title of the novel is significant because *A House For Mr. Biswas* traces the journey of a man who is not only ill-treated by his destiny but also by his people in return from being an unlucky child born in the family to his continues efforts in quest for identity in order to get his own house which shows the phase of the men in the society who keep on struggling in order to get a status and identity within the society.

A House For Mr. Biswas written by V.S Naipaul has an autobiographical significance for Mr. Biswas because as it is set on his own mother land and also because the characters modelled are on his own blood relations and it is the story of his own father which inspired him to write about the story *A House For Mr .Biswas*.

Conclusion- The research article according to my opinion portrays the common men of the society and their continuous struggles and efforts get approved in the society because when a man gets married the family grows and the family wants just keep on increasing so its necessary for an individual to find a shelter and be independent for its own and its family which also symbolises its identity and it also shows that how an man is ignored by the society

that we often forget that in order to reach its destiny an individual faces so much of stress that worries takes place to depression to anxiety which turns out to be man's biggest fear because the whole family is dependent on the man of the family he is the person who earns and brings the money to the family and that's how the family functions fulfilling all its needs so we often forget and tend to ignore the man of the family thinking that his job to work get money to the family but nobody tends to see the trauma he goes through fulfilling his family needs and we see that clearly in the character of Mr . Biswas who continuously struggles to get a house for him and his growing family his hope and faith is continuously broken down and shattered when he is not able to build his own house as it is broken down due to some or the natural calamity .At the end though he finds a house of his own but he cannot enjoy the time spending with his family in his own house as he goes through a series of heart attacks because of the stress and anxieties he had been getting to repay his debts and building a house for his family ,but he leaves behind a house that will shelter his family as long as they live.

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