



R K Narayan's The Guide

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Abstract: From the story, we find the element of progress in every sphere of the story. We find the progress in Raju as he turned out to be a saint from a sinner. We find progress in Rosie as she achieved perfection in dance. We find progress in Marcopolo's project as he achieved what he wanted, that is, his studies. Of course, even in the place of action, Malgudi, we find a lot of progress, as it became urbanized. We find this novel human beings all of a sudden falling into death, as we find Raju meeting his own fate at the end.

Key words: Novel, R.K. Narayan, hypocrisy

Introduction

According to many critics R K Narayan's The Guide is a comedy with a gentle satire on an ordinary irresponsible person's progress towards a saint. The Novel makes a good humored fun of both individual character and hypocrisy of Indian society.

Narration

Narayan simply exposes the deception of the people, who dream of things that are not there. They try to hide from the realities of life. The nature of comedy is to probe in to the duplicity through wit and irony. This is a story of a man who interferes into the affairs of others, that leads him into an awkward situation. This is also a story of a Swami, whose mind moves round "bondas" while preaching sermons. This is also a story of a small village that enters into the glamorous existence of civilization brought by a newly built railway station. This story is no doubt comical and entertaining. Lastly but not the least this is a story that runs round the fate. The comedy in the novel is on the surface only.

Let us observe the concluding line "Raju sagged down". To imagine that Raju simply becomes unconscious and later recovers suggests that there should

be a sequel to this novel. Thus we can say that it falls short of the last one of "a good beginning, a good middle and a good end. "we can also say that Raju not only became failure to bring rains but also to become a saint. Raju goes down on his knees and collapses on his haunches indicates Raju's death and death cannot be comical.

We find this novel human beings all of a sudden falling into death, as we find Raju meeting his own fate at the end. So we find the co-existence of comedy and tragedy. At this juncture we have to remember Dr. Samuel Johnson's words as he said that life itself is a mixture of tragedy and comedy. Laughter is a common human gesture and it conceals sorrow. Both tragic elements and laughter are put side by side in this novel in a peculiar manner by R.K. Narayan

The major characters in this novel are Raju, Rosie and Marco. They are not only social but also spiritual. They are of different types. They have three different kinds of dreaming. Raju is a man of simple sensuous dreaming. Rosie's is artistic dreaming and Marco as intellectual dreaming. The other characters are of secondary importance. Raju's parents Gaffur, Mani and Velan. Only Velan comes out as a



representative of rural India. Raju is quite a mediocre but he has his own peculiar nature of interfering in matters of others. This is because of his sympathy for fellow human beings. We find the same type of character in another story of R K Narayan "The Missing Mail", in which the post man involves and becomes a part and parcel of the people's lives. As a post man he can visit everybody's house. In the same way Raju can approach any visitor to Malgudi Railway Station.

Raju always says "yes" to others, particularly to his railway tourists. If we observe his own words. In the text, whether he likes anything personally or not, he always response to his tourists in a positive manner. The question of his own preferences was secondary. The interests of his tourists are primary to him. He tells the readers not to think that he likes elephants.

He arranges a lamb to bait the tiger. Personally he never likes either the lamb or the tiger to die. So whatever he did, he never did it with any evil intention.

In the prison Raju used to advocate that if a prisoner forgets that he is between the walls, he can be happy. We can say that he follows fully the philosophy of considering suffering as pleasure.

Loyalty has been his virtue. He declares "Once I take charge of any one, I always feel that they are my responsibility till I see them off again safely.

The narrative technique of the novel his zig zag. It moves from the present to the past and again from the past to the present. Because of this technique, the reader may feel the novel

ambiguous as he fails to rearrange the events in a proper manner.

The setting of the novel his Malgudi. Once it has rural setting. As the story progresses, it become urbanized.

We find the element of progress in every sphere of the story. We find the progress in Raju as he turned out to be a saint from a sinner. We find progress in Rosie as she achieved perfection in dance. We find progress in Marcopolo's project as he achieved what he wanted, that is, his studies. Of course, even in the place of action, Malgudi, we find a lot of progress, as it became urbanized.

R K Narayan used the Indian mythology and sentiment fully. He knows well the reactions of the Indian readers. Rosie did not go away from her husband towards Raju We can compare the transformation of the character of Raju, (a sinner becoming a saint) to Valmiki, Punderika, Vemana and others.

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