

Character Sketch of Abhiley :

The writer 'Abdul Gani Sheikh' has beautifully portrayed a rendezvous of simplicity and ignorance with modernity in his short-story-Abhiley. The character of Abhiley is worth contemplating and we come across many such Abhileys in our day-to-day life. A woman who has led her entire life in sheer ignorance and simplicity is suddenly exposed to the complicated and abstruse world of modernity. Her reaction obviously would be sometimes humorous and sometimes pathetic.

The very beginning of the story shows the apprehensions and fears that haunt in the old age. At the same time, we are also introduced to the indifference of others towards Abhiley. The younger generations mostly fail to understand elders love for them and when they realize it is already too late. While other family members take it easy, Abhiley is not ready to accept the separation from her loved ones. She always misses Ruksana her grand daughter and keeps asking everyone about her whereabouts.

Abhiley is simple at heart. She knows nothing about modern technology and outside world. So her, Srinagar is as distant a place as Turkey. She is truly a very innocent and ignorant woman. If she hears of a mishap anywhere, she at once, becomes worried about her grand daughter, Ruksana.

She is a talkative lady and loves to chatter with her friends about familiar matters. She loves to gossip. Once she went to see a movie. The movie bored her. It was a horrible experience to see moving images on the screen. Someone told her that it was about mother-in-law and their bad treatment of their daughter-in-law. The next day she sat on roof top with other lady and spewed poison on all mother-in-laws. Such was her innocence that she failed to understand that she herself was someone's mother-in-law.

Abhiley also suffered from the fear of crowds. Once she had gone to annual dormice festival. The hustle and bustle squeezed breath out of her and she decided never to go there again.

She is a loving granny. Once she heard that there were floods in Srinagar, such was her love for her grand daughter, she ventured out of hamlet (which she would have never done before owing to some fears) just to know about the well-being of her grand daughter. Once convinced, she became so restless to go back to her home that compelled the author to purchase return tickets on the very same evening.

THEMES:

The short story 'Abhiley' revolves around two grand themes: Tradition verses modernity, and the simplicity and innocence of rustics. The writer 'Abdul Gani Sheikh' has beautifully portrayed a rendezvous of simplicity and ignorance with modernity in his short story-Abhiley. Abhiley has led her entire life in sheer ignorance and simplicity. Her reaction obviously would be sometime humorous and sometimes pathetic. Her too much ignorance makes her a laughable character. Even the members of her own family giggle at her ignorance.

Abhiley represents the simplicity of Ladakhi women. She is simple at heart. She knows nothing about modern technology and outside world. Respecting one's tradition is a good thing but it shouldn't mean that we don't know even the difference between Srinagar and Turkey, or between Delhi and Srinagar.

Generation Gap is another theme of the story. The younger generations are indifferent towards Abhiley. They fail to understand Abhiley's love and concern. Instead of seeing things from her point of view, they make fun of her.

GENERATION GAP:

With the emergence of a new Generation, new values, new traditions, new ideologies and new aspirations also take birth. Youth stands for adventure and enterprise. It is full of energy and enthusiasm; initiative and activities. It believes in going forward. It is bubbling with new ideas on the other hand; age stands for old order or traditions. The younger generations fail to understand the morals and values to which the oldies stick to. They do not want to believe in readymade beliefs. At the same time, the older generations are not ready to change and accept the new ideologies of younger folks, with result, the two generations-old and new, are at loggerheads with each other. This gives birth to Generation Gap, or a conflict or clash between the father and the son, or between age and youth. With the result, distances are created leading to communication barrier. Parents can play a vital role in minimizing communication Barrier. This problem is found more in working parents they don't have much time to spend with their wards. When they realize the problem, it's already too late. So, parents must ensure to spend extra time with their children. The elders should change their mentality and attitude towards youngsters. Generation Gap can be abridged by sympathy and better understanding minor faults on both sides must be overlooked and shortcomings should be forgiven. The key to this problem is one word '**ADJUSTMENT**'. Parents must appreciate children for what they are and not for what they want to be. Parents should enter into an open discussion with their children regarding various issues- religious, morals, political, ethical, etc. Quoting examples and narrating stories of great men can be helpful in grooming the moral self of youngsters. What is needed is friendship, not animosity; sympathy, not criticism; understanding, not judgment; to abridge the Generation Gap.

HOW'LL YOU RELATE BACKWARDNESS TO ILLITERACY:

Some unfortunate folks unable to receive proper education because of poverty, gender or other such reasons tend to be illiterate. As we know, education helps in unfolding the mind. An educated man doesn't simply know a few facts, he knows himself and his place in the society. Sadly an illiterate knows nothing about his status in a society. For him all faces remain insulated. He fails to understand the realities. He can't differentiate between good and bad, and stays away from his responsibilities. An illiterate fellow lacks the qualities of the refinement of perception, depth of insight and sureness of perception. His illiteracy plugs him into the dark wells of superstition and blind beliefs. An illiterate is more gullible and gets easily cheated. Slavery, untouchability, dowry system, and other such social evils are prevalent only in literate societies. An illiterate farmer knows nothing of latest technologies and fails to improve the yield of crops. An illiterate businessman is not aware of latest market trends and fails to boost it resulting in huge losses. Be it a farmer, a businessman, or any other person, illiteracy halts their progress and thus keeps them backward thus, illiteracy itself is the root cause of backwardness of a person, a society or a nation. If we want to progress and curb backwardness, we need to be confident, responsible, and full of knowledge which can be attained only through proper education.

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