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A Raisin in the Sun

‘A Raisin in the Sun’ is a play by the African American author, named Lorraine Hansberry, which sheds light on the dreams and aspirations of an African American family, living in the south side of Chicago. Mama is the new head of the family, after the death of her husband and plays an important role in the life of her family members, which consist of her two children, a daughter-in-law and a grandson. She spent a struggling life during the era of racial discrimination and segregation and now wants her family to live happily and peacefully. The character of Mama may have been depicted as a strong and determined woman, who faced great struggles in her life; however, she is equally lovely and caring towards all the members of her family and wants to see them happy and successful.

According to my sense of character about mama, she has faced the bitter struggles of equality and prosperity in her life, and now she wants to secure a better future for her children. She does not want to see them suffering or unhappy in their lives. Therefore she stresses to use the insurance money of her deceased husband, for the purpose of buying a nice house. On the other hand, her son wants to invest the money in his business so, he does not have to work as a chauffeur anymore (Hansberry). She is willing to give him money for the sake of his business, after separating the share of his sister’s education and the payment of their new house, however, she does not want him to do the business of alcohol. When he tries to explain to her that things have changed and surviving is difficult, she tells him,

“No … something has changed. (She looks at him) You something new, boy. In my time we was worried about not being lynched and getting to the North if we could and how to stay alive and still have a pinch of dignity too … Now here come you and Beneatha— talking ’bout things we ain’t never even thought about hardly, me and your daddy (p. 73).”

Having equal opportunities of progress and owning a home, were the biggest dreams of the African American community in the segregation era. Mama's dream was also to own a house, which could secure the future of her children, as well as provide his grandson with better memories of childhood. She wanted him to play in a bigger lawn and have his own room. Act three of the play reveals the soft and loving side of mama when she has a conversation with her daughter in law, who is facing difficulties in life. Her husband has lost his share of the business, due to his deceiving partner and they are not a loving couple anymore (Hansberry). Moreover, she is thinking about abortion. Mama tells her that she should feel sorry for the suffering of her husband and not because he is unable to please his family. She says, “There is always something left to love. And if you ain’t learned that, you ain’t learned nothing (p. 144).”

After facing all the struggles in life, the main character of the play, Mama, now wants her family to live a happy life. She wants to buy a house for her family. She wants her daughter to find her passion and purpose in life and does not enforce any proposal on her. She scolds her son for not paying attention to his wife, and she guides her how she can restore her love with her husband. She deeply cares for her plants and all of this reveals her loving and kind nature.

Work Cited

Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*. Samuel French, Inc., 1984: 1-156.