**Plot - Construction of Novel The Guide by R.K. Narayan**

**Introduction:**

R. K. Narayan's novels are mainly the novels of character. But plot also have important roles. His stories are interesting but they do not include startling episodes. There are no complications and complexities. The narration moves very smoothly in an ordinary and straightforward way, the interests of his characters are simple and common and hence need no structural complication.

**Mixture of Comic and Serious and the Real and Fantastic:**

In the plot of The Guide there is a mixture of the comic and the serious, the real and the fantastic. Raju is a middle class person. His father runs a shop at the hut and afterwards at the railway station of Malgudi, he helps Rosie in her career of dance achieve a public recognition. Through her dance shows he earns a lot of money and becomes rich. He forges the signature of Rosie on the documents sent by Marco's lawyer and becomes a convict and is sentenced to two years’ imprisonment. He goes to the village Mangala and circumstance force him to become a saint. There he is put to such situations that compel him to fast for bringing down rain in the village. In his heart he wishes to eat food and he is haunted with food - thoughts but he has to observe fast. There is good blending of the comic and the serious.

**Two Parts of the Novel:**

The Guide is the story of Raju's romance, adventure, greed for money, crime of forgery, sin and repentance. It is also the story of everyman's development from the ordinary to the extraordinary. The novel is divided into two parts, the first part deals with the growth of Raju as a child and a young man who falls in love with a miserable woman Rosie neglected and deserted by her husband Marco. She has a thirst for dancing career. She wants to be a famous dancer. This part of the story closes with Raju's imprisonment. The second part shows Raju's growth into a Swami after his release from the jail. Raju is the master and architect of the first part, while the second part is totally in the hands of the novelist who controls it.

Raju's father was a small shopkeeper at the Malgudi station. Raju saw the construction of the station and enjoyed the company of the labourers. He studied in Pyol School and within a year he was sent to the Board High School. His father had two shops and Raju had to sit at both the shops turn by turn. He became very busy so he left study. Raju's father died and left much money. Raju closed the old shop and the new shop was left in the charge of the son of the porter.

As a guide he came across Marco and Rosie. Rosie was interested in seeing a King Cobra. He took her to see a cobra and came to know that she was a great dancer. Raju helped her in her dance career. When she became a famous dancer, through her dance shows he earned a lot of money. She used to live with Raju as her husband who was always busy with his papers and took no interest in her, deserted her because of her intimacy with Raju.

After some time Marco's lawyer sent a few documents to Rosie to sign them for returning her jewellery box kept in the bank. Raju forged Rosie's signature on them. The result was he was arrested and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment.

Rosie saved him from the jail. She went away to Madras to settle there independently. After his release from the jail Raju went to the village Mangala. There he was taken as the holy man - the Swami. Where was no rain, he had to fast for bring down rain the village. He fasted for twelve days and the last day he sagged in the water with the words that the rain was falling in the hills and he felt it coming down under his feet and upto his legs. Thus, he became a martyr sacrificing his life for the welfare of humanity.

The Salient Features of the Plot of “The Guide”:

1. The plot has been designed in the manner of a biography. The present and the past have mingled together.

2. The dramatic elements - dialogues and action are introduced. The number of characters and episodes are limited. It seems to be a fine act play. The whole of the story of Raju is given in the novel - from his birth to his martyrdom.

3. The plot had a beginning, middle and an end. The hero is present throughout not major the plot logically develops. There are no irrelevant details in the plot. There internal conflicts but Raju suffers from minor internal mental conflicts.

4. All events are well knit in forming a pattern. There are no loose episodes. The plot has been knit on the principle of poetic justice. The sinner or the criminal Raju is punished. But he is fated to die as a martyr hence he sags in the water.

5. The novelist follows the technique of the double narration, a sort of past and present narration technique. There are three episodes and three important individuals are de centres of these episodes. Raju is the master figure. Rosie is the foundation of the romantic and tragic life of Raju. In Velan lies the seed of the holy man episode.

Backgrounds and moods and scenes - the Malgudi Railway station , the forests of Mempi Hills, the source of Sarayu, caves, public stages, Indian cities, Madras and jail, the river and the village Mangala make the story interesting and enchanting.

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