

The pickup by nadine gordimer essay sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Nadine Gordimer, a winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, has always been one of South Africa's leading literary voices. She is one of the most important strivers who used their intelligence and qualifications to fight against the apartheid movement in South Africa which was a racial system, based on total segregation between the whites and the blacks. Gordimer uses her novels and stories to explain the aspects of this system and to raise her voice in protest against it. A case in point is her latest novel "the pickup" which not only explores the theme of racial segregation but also deals with many other themes such as love, family relationships, money, gender, sex, immigration...etc. and which brings to light several inspiring moral ambiguities. « The pickup » is a love story of a kind in which Nadine Gordimer tells about two characters from completely different social backgrounds and with fully dissimilar convictions and ambitions. Julie is a daughter of an affluent man who is escaping from her hereditary welfare and likes better modesty and simplicity.

She has picked up a dark-skinned undocumented man from an Arabic country who is in search of a better life in order to support his family. Admittedly, the novel is divided into two parts. The first part sheds light on how they met and the experience they had lived in Johannesburg before the authorities required him to leave the country, while the second part is concerned with their shift to his native country and the consequences that come out of it. In this essay, I will try to provide a detailed commentary on the opening of the second part of the story and the role that it plays in the novel. Just by reading the first sentence of the second part, we feel the indication that unlike the first part, this one is going to be about Abdu and

that we will discover his identity and his culture, whilst he was anonymous, and depreciated in South Africa. Now he is home, he has a name, an identity and an existence. Gordimer evidences this by referring to him by his real name and for the first time in the novel. " Ibrahim Ibn Musa". What Gordimer also refers to in this passage is that Abdu is going to start dominating his relationship with Julie - which is -again- contrasted with the first part of the novel in which Julie was ruling their affair. Gordimer tells of this by using the expression " from behind him".

This also hints at the Arabic-Islamic culture which is a male oriented culture, where only men are allowed to guide and lead while women are only dependents and subordinates to them. Apart from the gender theme, the writer successfully refers to the class matter by providing the reader with a realistic representation of Abdu 's land, describing it as a necessitous place where people are very embryonic and ignorant. This is not a surprising fact for the reader, since this is what is expected for a third world country to look like. And also because we learned through Abdu before that he comes from a very poor country. At this point, we comprehend the reason why Abdu considers his homeland as a prison which he wishes to get away from and to leave it behind him with the hope of finding a better place with better opportunities. The image of the airport also refers to the theme of transition and the consequences that may come out of it as the person is probably moving to a place nothing like his/her home and this might cause a culture shock and thus the person finds him/herself facing different barriers. What might be worse is that when the one comes back to his country, he finds

himself unable to reconsolidate with it. And this is what Gordimer refers to in this passage.

She represents indirectly that the fact of moving overseas like a giant leap into the unknown. While referring to immigration and transition, Gordimer describes Julie as being confused and having no sense of who she is. This is possibly because she has never been in a country like this and she has never seen people acting the way these people do. This is dissimilar to the situation she had in the first part of the novel, where she was described as a well-known acclaimed girl who is a daughter of a wealthy investment banker and who has connections everywhere in the country. This is also an indication that Abdu is the one who will support her. She will discover that new world through his eyes since he is the only person she knows there, while everyone else is “ nameless”, strange and bizarre to her. This, again, reinforces the idea that it is Abdu who is going to start dominating the relationship. Admittedly, Julie is not afraid of travelling and moving to another country which she has never heard of before.

We learned before that she is an adventuresome person who doesn't stick to the rules that's why we deduce that she will enjoy the adventure in her husband's country because, to some extent, this is what she has been looking for from the beginning of the novel. Unlike Abdu, whose wishes are completely different as he dreams of living in a developed country where he can get a better life which better chances. In a nutshell, the opening of the second part of the novel is a very important passage as it represents a shifting point in the story which will certainly lead to a complete convulsion

and will guide to new directions neither Julie nor Abdu has expected. Is Julie going to like her husband's homeland? Are they going to stay in his country? Will Abdu's culture affect his relationship with his wife? These are the questions this passage leaves us with. As a result, this encourages us to continue to read Nadine Gordimer's novel " the pickup" in a more attentive way.