

Anil's ghost courage essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

At the start of the novel, Anil did not have inspiration or courage to continue with her studies as an archeologist. Anil "[...] seemed timid to herself. She felt lost and emotional. " (Ondaatje 142). Anil was at a low point in her life, and felt vulnerable because her parents had died in a car crash and she was living in London — a city new to her. After a while she would meet a man from Colombo, who was a med student. This man "[...] focused his wits entirely on Anil [...]" (142) this man seemed perfect in the sense that he was "[...] a many-armed seducer and note writer and flower bringer and telephone-message leaver [...]" (142). He seemed like the perfect man for Anil, someone to make her special and loved. However, Anil relies on her self a lot, therefore; it was no wonder that once she gained back the courage and inspiration she had before the marriage, she would leave. Gradually, Anil is slowly getting back to the same state she once was, therefore; not needing her husband anymore. It was apparent that the marriage would not last as " At home the two of them fought [...] over everything. " (143). One must go through downs before they experience ups — through Anil, this is shown by her marrying a man for her own benefits, to gain courage so she may do other things in her life such as change her name, do her job, and ultimately divorce her husband she had met from Colombo. Furthermore, Anil displayed courage by going through great lengths to create her own identity and take control of her own life decisions. In the course of a travelling life and a series of broken relationships, Anil has re-defined her self as that girl who "[...] live[s] here [...] in the West. " (36). Anil has the advantage of re-defining her self in a new place because no one knows about her past life and what she has done, therefore; she may say anything to make her sound like she fits in, even though she does not know the language. To get to where Anil wanted

to be (Sri Lanka), Anil has changed her name. " She gave her brother one hundred saved rupees, a pen set he had been eyeing for some time, a tin of fifty Gold Leaf cigarettes she had found, and a sexual favor he had demanded [...]. " (68). Not many girls would sleep with her brother, but she showed determination to get what she wanted, which ultimately; led to her courage becoming more important to her through her journey in Sri Lanka. After she had slept with her brother and gave him gifts, she had his name. Anil would go to an astrologer with her parents to finalize the name she had gotten from her brother. The astrologer offered "[...] the addition of an e, so she would be Anile. It would make her and her name more feminine; the e would allow the fury to curve away. But she refused even this. " (136). Anil made a bold move and denied adding the " e", showing that she wants to be independent and wants to separate her self from her family. By saying no to adding the " e" she demonstrated courage by wanting to make her own decisions, and basing them off what was best for her. Not what was best for her parents. Moreover, Ondaatje demonstrated that Anil was to be independent of other people, and did not want to be suppressed by anyone. She revealed this trait when "[her husband] objected to her having a full-time career, keeping her own name, [and] was annoyed at her talking back" (143). Showing courage, Anil stood up to her suppressing husband and left him behind in pursue of self-fulfillment to pursue her career, and start her life over in Sri Lanka — where no one knew her. In addition to suppression, Anil never gave her family rest, which is peculiar behavior for Sri Lankans who are always " surrounded by family order" (138). Usually, parents set rules and guide you through life and tell you what to do. Anil stood up to her parents and showed audacity by pursuing her career, even if it meant that

she would be upsetting her parents. Her parents wanted to be a swimmer, but she wanted something bigger — to solve the mass murders in Sri Lanka. Someone who has guts is someone who has great courage. For Anil, she did not listen to her parents and go into swimming but she pursued her dream, to be an archaeologist. The relationships she had been in, resulted in her getting overpowered and having people make decisions for her. Her relationship was wound tightly that Cullis never had any control over her (264), illuminating that she could not be tied down, and because she did daring and courageous acts such as change her name, divorce a husband, and repel from her family by pursuing her career; she could not go back on what she had done. Not only did she change her name, and disregard her parent's values, she also called out the Sri Lankan government on killing Sailor and many other people (272). Through the daring acts Anil did, she shows great courage and sets a very good example for women as she refuses to be suppressed by men or anyone else, and wants to take control over her own life. To struggle against great odds is the essence of real courage. This definition is displayed among the character, Anil. Anil overcomes the tragedy of her parent's death and still manages to live a usual life. She also chooses to go against the Sri Lankan government even to the extent of accusing them for government murder despite her lack of evidence. Because Anil showed courage throughout her journey to uncover what happened to people of Sri Lanka, she succeeded ultimately exposing the government for what they did. The difference between showing courage and giving up when faced with a challenge is winning and losing. Anil showed courage and faced adversity, which is why she uncovered the mystery of Sailor's identity.