

White tiger



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In current society many books are written based racial or social issues reflecting the past, present or future. The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga is an example that confronts social and racial issues within India, shown through the eyes of servant to wealthy, named Balram. Born in rural part of India with a deceased mother and rickshaw-pulling father, Balram is dedicated to serving others. Whether it was driving the wealthy around, grinding coal, or running behind cars to get a job, Balram's life was constant and there was no chance of him becoming a man who had servants.

He was judged on where he was from and the family he was born into just like Jim was judged in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* for the color of his skin. They both had nothing to do with what they were born with but they both try to make the best of their lives by making relationships with those of a higher class or skin tone. In comparison to *The White Tiger* Balram shows how he deals with struggles within given class in order to better himself in the modern Indian society. The common apartment buildings in Delhi thrive on the past like caste systems based on the structure of the floors within the apartment.

Balram describes his job, as a servant is to drive his masters around and then when they return to the buildings clean the apartment or do anything for his masters waiting for the master to tell him to leave until the morning. When Balram is done with work he goes downstairs to the servants' quarters in the basement, which is traditional to have in apartment buildings because all residential buildings or homes are built with quarters to house their servants. These living arrangements are a place of "rest, sleep, and wait."

When our masters wanted us an electric bell began to ring throughout the quarters...I swept the floor, tied the mosquito net to four nails on the wall, and went to sleep. The wall was covered with cockroaches,”(108-110). While their masters lived in beautiful, cleanly apartments, their servants sleep on the lowest part of the building full of cockroaches and dirt awaiting the bell to go to their masters. The life in the apartment building represents the Caste System, that was prominent in India but now is illegal all over India, with the poorest, lowest class in basement and then the rising castes follow.

Although Balram does not highlight the floor assignments of the building resembling the Caste System; the idea of living below your master is a representation of the ancient but known system. Life as servant for Balram in India means that he can't be considered or seen doing the same things as his masters suggesting that he is not of the social status to partake in the same activities. The idea that Balram drives his masters to the mall and then not allowed to enter the same mall as them is ridiculous.

But its not just Balram who sits and waits outside for his clients but other chauffeurs cannot enter the mall too. Balram describes his desire to go into the mall but knows that the guards will never let him because of the way he is dressed. “ I went to the gateway of the mall in my new white T-shirt. But there, the moment I saw the guard, I turned around- went back to the Honda City...Even as I was walking side the mall, I was sure someone would say, Hey! That man is a paid driver! What's he doing in here,” (128)?

Going to the mall is like entering a prestigious club with guards protecting it to make sure those who did not belong get in. This representation of the Caste System is shown by those who were not in the right class would not

have the same privilege of shopping in the mall like the upper classes. Balram compares being a servant of the wealthy to a Rooster Coop, where both a servant and rooster are trapped in a controlling world of a master that is useful and beneficial to the master.

“ He unloads all this furniture for you, and you give him the money in cash-a fat wad of cash the size of a brick...A years salary, two years' salary, in his hands, and he never takes a rupee of it,” (148). The idea of the Rooster Coop is that these servants have so many opportunities to steal the money of their masters but they do not want to disobey them. They are worried that their families will be harmed and therefore these servants are imprisoned by the rich just the chickens are by farmers.