

# "the lottery" by chris abani essay sample



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## **“ The Lottery” by Chris Abani Essay Sample**

“ The Lottery” written by Chris Abani was a reflection of an event that took place during his own youth. It was primarily about vigilante justice and how public mobs would decide someone’s fate. The mobs would use no legal process when deciding if someone was guilty of a crime and the accused would face the consequences regardless of being innocent. There was no trial for the accused, and if the mob wanted you punished it was going to happen most defiantly without reason. This was most unfortunate for the accused because the penalty was paid ultimately with their life.

The essay being titled “ The Lottery” has nothing to do with money or gambling. It was more so a metaphorical way of expressing how ones odds were slim if and when the mobs targeted them. If the accused were innocent then it wouldn’t matter what the crime was. It seems like anyone could have started a rumor about someone and eventually the rumor would be seen as truth. Thus in turn the mob would rally for action and impose justice themselves. It’s kind of like Russian roulette. The bullet resembles the mob hypothetically targeting you. No one can control when they will strike, but if managing to avoid them equates to keeping your life, then theoretically you won “ The Lottery”.

The events of this essay closely reflect those of which the Salem witch trials possessed. In both cases the accused faced executions after being accused of crimes, guilty or not, due to accusations of large groups of people. The large groups in these events were simply the majority and contesting their claims was simply unattainable. Sadly the accusers couldn’t have came up

with an alternative punishment to death, but in both events they seemed to make examples of the accused and show that they would not tolerate the same actions from anyone else.

The importance of the fifth paragraph in "The Lottery" provided historical reference which in turn validated the essay as nonfiction. It was almost like the story stopped for a brief moment and the narrator stepped in to inform the reader to what was actually going on. The editorials mentioned in the fifth paragraph contained events similar to that of what Abani was witnessing. Abani didn't know why it was happening, but now he knew he had seen in person what the editorials depicted.

The fifth paragraph was vital to understanding the plot within the essay. Had it not been included, many readers would have simply assumed "The Lottery" was fictional. It helped by illustrating the connection of Abani's past with facts and made the essay more realistic to them. Placement of the fifth paragraph was key to making "The Lottery" an enjoyable read. Abani integrated this paragraph strategically in order to express his emotions by shifting to narration. Altering the placement of the paragraph to the end of the essay would have informed the reader too late that what they were reading was actually a real life encounter for him as a child. Its placement assists the readers in understanding what they read in prior paragraphs, and allows them to connect with Abani throughout the rest of the essay until completion.