

**'between ourselves'
and 'joebell' and
'america' essay
sample**



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The stories are quite different apart from the fact that both are about America, culture and identity.

Between Ourselves is about an Indian girl who has travelled to America for further education. She is Hindu and her mother is telling her not to marry someone from there. She meets and marries an American and of course her parents do not approve. Later the woman regrets the loss of Indian culture. Lovelace's story is about Joebell a Trinidadian who is trying to go to America. He thinks that he is a hero and is risk taker and would have a better life in America. In the end he fails to go to America and then realises that Trinidad is where he belongs partly because he never saw an American fail.

Joebell as a character is very different from lots of people: he is courageous and takes risks e. g. he takes a big risk getting the fake passport. Joebell has been influenced very much by American films especially cowboy films. In Joebell's mind America is everything e. g. " Where everybody have a motor car and you could ski on snow and where it have seventy five channels of colour television". This is what Joebell is thinking about nothing else, just watching television all day. I think Joebell has a presence of fame, as he would go in a snackette and would take up a big space and just ask for a toothpick. Above all I think Joebell is a very interesting person, as he would do things that other people wouldn't. The Mother in " Between Ourselves" is someone who cares about her daughter a lot, she is worried that her daughter will meet and marry a man in America and marry.

She writes " Your Ghosh Mashima asked me the other day if I was expecting an American son-in-law. Of course not our Miru is as she was before and she

would not do such a thing, she went to America to study not to catch a husband", this shows that Miru's mother is proud of her religion, faith, culture and tradition. When Miru replies saying that she is going to marry an American, the mother shows her frustration e. g. " Both your father and I are astounded by your letter, so Ghosh Mashima was not so wrong after all! How could you!" This shows the anger of the Mother as she sends the money for her flight back. The daughter (Miru) is a person who is very determined and independent. The choice for her to go to university in America changes the rest of her life and a choice that she can't change. Her relationship with her Mother that was once strong is now vulnerable, E. g. I miss you a lot, with respect and love, yours Miru". This was Miru's first letter, the last letter that she wished she had written conveyed a lot more anger e. g. I am even more astounded by your lack of understanding, you show no sympathy for my inner struggle", this shows her anger at her mother.

' Between Ourselves' is a story that has been written in a series of letters between mother and daughter. I think that this shows that it is a personal story and intimate. The letters give the reader the idea that they are eavesdropping on someone else's conversation. In Joebell and America the story changes from third person to first person. I think that Earl Lovelace has written this brilliantly, when I first read it I did not notice it, it was like looking at someone doing something then the next minute you are in that persons brain, the effect of this is emphasised because it is at a extremely crucial part, when the two immigration officers " Squirrel eyes " and the other man sit next to Joebell. It also slows down the tension, its like the reader identifies with Joebell.

In ' Joebell and America' there is some very entertaining language, the whole way through the story, e. g. When Joebell's mother hears that her son is going to America she says " Joebell gone away..... praise God! ". The way Joebell thinks that he is a hero and how Joebell tries to be a Yankee " How ya doin, main! Hiya baby!". The story is written in a Trinidadian dialect, which makes it more fun, more interesting because it is written in a way that someone speaks and it has a powerful rhythm. This is very different to ' Between Ourselves', this story funny whereas ' Between Ourselves' is a lot more tense, more serious between the mother and daughter e. g. the way the mother reacts when she reads what her daughter has written in the letter that she is going to marry someone from America, the mother is astounded, and shocked with disgust. I think this story would keep you at the " edge of your seat" in a more serious way.

The different stories tell two numerous attractions of America, firstly in ' Between Ourselves' the letters make you think that this is the homeland of the world, where you meet a whole new world, but the food is not as good as the food in Calcutta, whereas in ' Joebell and America, the attraction to America is having a chance to watch seventy five channels of colour television. Personally I think that just going to America to watch TV is very sad.

When Earl Lovelace wrote ' Joebell and America' I think he wanted to make us feel that Trinidad society is worth staying in, rather than going to America, and that Joebell would be better in Trinidad because he likes to walk and likes to know everyone around him, in ' Between Ourselves' the author wants us to think that when you move from one country to another, it <https://assignbuster.com/between-ourselves-and-joebell-and-america-essay-sample/>

is like changing cultures and is never simple, also when you move countries and stay for a long time your culture and identity from your homeland maybe lost.

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