

Another country by james baldwin



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"Another Country" is a masterpiece of James Baldwin who is an expert in highlighting moral and social issues through his works and this novel is no different.

This novel was written by James Baldwin in 1962. This novel is about the struggles that artists go through in the metropolitan city of New York before settling in this city. This struggle is about to love and to get love from the people who enjoy their aptitude. This novel also talks about complexities of homophobia, racism, homosexuality and other immoralities prevalent among the society.

The main character discussed in this book is Rufus who was a black musician. The book starts by describing Rufus's last years of life. The time period used in this book is late 1950s. The main concept discussed in this book is how life teaches you different lessons. His digression from the right paths has led him to the point of suicide. Therefore, one must always be steadfast and use the right paths for fame so that he may not live to regret in the later path of his life like Rufus. Rufus was in love with a woman called Leona, who was a white woman. Rufus used to beat Leona and always used to ask her "Do you love me" This shows the inner insecurity that Rufus felt about his relationship. This relationship wasn't successful as Leona goes insane in the end and Rufus was at a point of committing suicide. This shows that it was increasingly difficult in America at the time for people of different races to get together and get married. And this discrimination was probably the reason why Rufus committed suicide. The racial discrimination was so common in America during that time that Baldwin correctly highlights in the words of Cass, a character from his novel:

All policemen in those days were working for white people and they treat

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blacks very badly. In his novel at point of (245) we were told what Cass thought about policemen and how they used to treat black people.

" For all policemen were bright enough to know who they were working for, and they were not working, anywhere in the world, for the powerless" (Cass, page no: 245)

Another important characters discussed in the novel were Vivaldo, Ida's lover, Rufus's best friend, and an aspiring novelist; Eric, a white actor from the South and Rufus's erstwhile lover who has fled to France; Yves, Eric's current lover; and Cass Silenski and her novelist husband Richard, both Vivaldo's friends.

All of these people were trying to pull legs of each other to prevent them from reaching fame and to prevent them from reaching their potential heights. Nobody wanted someone else to be successful in his own field rather than his own self. This type of behavior reflected in this novel is being portrayed by Richard and Vivaldo. The main reason why these people were trying to pull each other's legs was that Vivaldo was angry that Richard's novel is being published and he'll get the financial gains and other rewards for that whereas Richard was trying to pull Vivaldo's leg because he was less of a success than Vivaldo. This rivalry was bitter and hence they both tried to show that they are better than the other individual. Similarly, Cass and Ida, two characters from the play were also trying to pull each others leg and to pull each other in isolation and obscurity. This has been expressed in the novel at Page no 90. " .. If Cass realized the power she held for the moment." (pp. 90)

The end of novels was joyous for the character discussed in the novel. The novel ends with Ida-Vivaldo and Eric-Yves tentatively reconciling their

differences and reuniting as couples. However, one another thing that can be learnt from the novel is that if the love is true than barriers like color, religion, and social status cannot stop the lovers from reuniting.