

Characterization of diaz's yunior



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Junot Diaz was born in the Dominican Republic and immigrated with his family to New Jersey, where a collection of his short stories are based from. Out of that collection is a short story "Fiesta, 1980", which was featured in *The Best American Short Stories, 1997*.

This story is told from the perspective of an adolescent boy, who lives in the Bronx of northern New Jersey with his family. He is having trouble understanding why things are the way they are in his family. Diaz shows Yunior's character through his cultures, his interaction with his family, and his bitterness toward his father. To show what kind of character Yunior is Diaz shows him through the two different cultures he has to live with daily. "arrived here (the United States) three years before" (Diaz, 171). Yunior and his family came to the United States from the Dominican Republic.

He is trying to keep living by his native culture, while learning to adapt to the American way of life. He tries adapting by fitting in with the local kids. "Not that me and Rafa loves baseball; we just like to hang with the local kids" (171). It is difficult to blend two cultures but Yunior seems to be able to get along just fine.

Diaz also shows what kind of character Yunior is by his interaction with his family. "me, I never wanted to go anywhere with my family" (171). The relationships Yunior has with his family are ones of tolerance. He and his brother, Rafa, are always at odds. He considers his brother "a low-down chickenshit" (172), because Rafa always "moves out of the way every time Papi was going to smack me" (172).

From interactions with his Mami, Yuniór has gotten a little religious. Mami always " pokes us in our five cardinal spots while saying, Que Dios te bendiga" (172) as Yuniór is about to walk out the door. Now every time he leaves the house the words following him around everywhere. Finally Diaz shows what kind of character Yuniór is through the bitterness he has toward his father.

" My father the Torture" (174). Yuniór's relationship between with his father is not that great. The man treats his son like he is dirt on the ground. This causes Yuniór to have a lot of bitterness toward his father. He feels he cannot do anything right in Papi's eyes.

" I was the one who was always in trouble with my dad. It was like my God-given duty to piss him off, to do everything the way he hated" (172). Yuniór just wants his father to love him, " Our fights didn't bother me too much. I still wanted him to love me, something that never seemed strange or contradictory until years later, when he was out of our lives" but that seems like too much to ask. His father does not only treat him like crap at home but in public too.

At the party, Papi humiliates Yuniór in front of everyone when he tells him " If you eat anything, I am going to beat you. ? Entiendes? I nodded. And if your brother gives you any food, I will beat him too. Right here in front of everybody. ? Entiendes? " (177).

Embarrassing Yuniór like that, caused him to have a whole lot of bitterness and hatred toward his father. " I wanted to kill him" (177). He dreams that his father will be publicly humiliated like he has always humiliates him. Diaz

does a pretty good job showing Yunior's character through the many aspects he presents. Whether it is showing his character through his culture, his family interaction, or the bitterness he has toward his father, Diaz shows that Yunior is a typical character from everyday life just trying to understand life from an adolescent view. He is building his character throughout the story, and many of these things Yunior can learn from and carry with him through life.

He comes to understand that things will not change, the way he wants them to. He realizes that his father is always going to be the way he is and nothing he does will change him.