

# Marriage is a private affair by chinua achebe

Literature



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Marriage Is a Private Affair Nnaemeka did not share the contents of the letter from his father because the letter states that his father had gone and found a girl for him to marry at home, when he wanted to marry Nene instead.

According to his father, the girl “ had received all the training a wife could need and she reads her bible very fluently.” (Achebe, C. 1952 p. 1).

(2) He conceals the contents of the letter probably because he is afraid of hurting Nene’s feelings. He is justified in not sharing such information, as it will only cause worries for Nene, and would probably not help in resolving the situation.

(3) It is a commonly assumed that marriage are based upon love, but even in our society people marry for reasons other than love. Okeke’s actions underline the grave implications of cultural reasons for marriage. According to Okeke, “ I owe it to you, my son, as a duty to show you what is right and what is wrong. Whoever put this idea into your head might as well have cut your throat. It is Satan’s work” (Achebe, C. 1952 p. 5). Marriage for any motive other than love is not justifiable, as it will certainly lead to problems like divorce and even murder.

(4) The way that Okeke treats his son and daughter-in-law in the book is quite disheartening and probably due to ignorance or lack of exposure on the father’s side. Okeke was just displaying prejudice and narrow-mindedness that comes from rigid traditional norms. It is never appropriate to disown one’s child, except in very extreme circumstances in which the child’s actions threatens the life of the parents or the life of other people. Disowning a child because he decides to choose a wife for himself is wrong.

(5) The rain near the end of the story is symbolic because rain is associated with freshness and a new beginning. In the book, the occurrence of rain is

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described as “ one of those rare occasions when even nature takes a hand in a human fight, and marks a change of season.” (Achebe, C. 1952 p. 8). So the rain helps to bring a new beginning for the individuals involved in the story.

(6) Nnaemeka’s optimism that his father will come to accept his marriage is validated by his father’s reactions to Nene’s letter at the end of the story. This is evident in the fact that his father later felt remorse for his earlier actions.

(7) This story exemplifies the Jean de la fontaine adage that slow and steady wins the race. As can be seen in the story, perseverance pays.

(8) Nnaemeka’s father objected to his marriage to Nene because she is not from the Ibo tribe. As a black American male, there might be some groups or people from particular ethnicities whose members it would be difficult for me to marry, like the Arab or middle-eastern region where there are numerous enemies of my country. It would be most unwise to get married to anybody from this area, as there will be severe limitations and difficulties to be faced in such a union.

(9) If I was in Fedrick Douglass’s position as a slave I would surely try to run away instead of accepting to remain a slave (Douglass F, 2008). Slavery entails a kind of bondage that is not suitable for human beings, and infringes the basic human right to freedom. Therefore, it is completely unacceptable to the human mind. If I found myself in a position to help a runaway slave, I would do what I can to assist the slave in gaining his or her freedom.

Works cited

Achebe, Chinua (1952) Marriage Is A Private Affair. Short story.

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Douglass, Frederick (2008) Learning to Read and Write. Twenty-Five Great Essays. Ed. Robert DiYanni. 3rd ed. New York: Pearson. 68-73.