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The Shadow: Dark Side of Life

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Abstract:

*Human became a social animal after Civilization. Civilization gave birth to societies. Societies turn into integral part of human life. As every coin has two sides, now-a-days social life has also two sides. One is ideological society, where everything is positive and ideal for everyone's life and other is realistic society, where both the type i.e. ideal as well as bitter truth exists. When we come across the life where human is physically impaired, either naturally or accidentally, the point of view of the same society becomes in the third manner where they look towards that person either disgustingly or with pity. No one look normally towards them. This directs them downwards. Although, there are exceptions too, despite taking care of views of the public, they aimed a new peek and got that in life, which inspires us to remember them always. One of them is Christy Brown, who made himself Immortal in Literature through her writings. When we are talking about Christy Brown, his autobiography **MY LEFT FOOT** cannot be forgotten. His another creation is his semi-autobiographical novel **Down All the Days**.*

Keywords: *Impaired, Fictionalized, Physiotherapy, Loneliness, Patronising.*

Introduction:

Disability can be felt your own when you are willing to do things but you can't do that and you have to sit everyday similarly at the same place in the same situation like a non-living thing your nature becomes annoyed and you turns bitter. The situation of Mr. Brown can be understood just by imaging that he could only see and hear while comparing to a normal human person.

Christy brown born in 1932. He belonged to a middle class working family. His father Mr. Patrick Brown was a bricklayer and his mother Bridget was a house wife. He was one of 22 children born to the Browns; only 13 lived to maturity. Although up to this level of introduction there is nothing special mentioned thing but the specialty was Christy born with a severe disease, called as

cerebral palsy. Throughout his life, he could not walk, or eat, or drink, or do anything else, without help. He could not speak properly, which was hard to be understood. As he was considered as Crippled, his father built a box-like carrier with wheels for him.

Christy wrote the fictionalized version of his own life *Down All the Days*. He wrote more autobiographical “My Left Foot”, with characters like Daniel Day- Lewis.

After the success of My Left Foot, Brown led his life towards normal life as normal human lives. He left the physiotherapy by saying, “Physiotherapist has done all it can do for me”. He, then, move in the direction of new writing which would be splendid. He thought this writing could make a chance to explore himself as normal person besides his disabilities.

Brown said *Down All the Days* is Brown’s stunning literary achievement and it sold over 500000 copies, after first published in 1970. Brown took 16 years for writing this novel.

The novel is a dense, lyrical work about the semi-fictional Brown family. It is set in Dublin during the 1940s. The protagonist is the author’s alter ego, therefore, he portrayed it as a dumb and nameless teenage boy with a disability, who is forced to turn around the streets of Dublin in a boxcar. He widely shows his loneliness because of his disabilities. He even considers his sexuality and witnesses the violence of his alcoholic father. The novel is also written from the point of other working class inner city characters, such as the protagonist’s father Patrick Brown (based on the author’s actual father). The novel concludes with the death of Patrick Brown.

In the book *Down All the Days*, the protagonist showed himself similar to the character taken by him. The lengthy, rich sentences are written in the present tense. This novel best demonstrates Brown’s open-minded treatment of sexuality and the individual. In almost every chapter, he used some reference to childbirth, pregnancy, violence, sexuality or death. For example, the protagonist experiences “painful, ecstatic, guilty” feelings about his body, he masturbates and his naked sister arouses him. The novel does not end happily either, it concludes with the death of the protagonist’s father, Patrick Brown.

Although Brown’s family shocked by the novel, it was extremely praised after publication. The Irish Times declared it “will surely stand beside Joyce and in front of all others as Dublin writ and writ large for all times” while the New York Times said, “nothing quite like this has been known in literature”. Brown describes this praise as “a flood of euphoria”. The former director of the National Library Alf MacLauchlan called it as episodic, voyeuristic. There were a few dissenting voices, however. Brown cared little for such criticisms. When Gay Byrne, presenter of the “Late-Late Show”, asked what Brown wanted to speak about his critics, he replied “F – f – f – f – fuck him”.

Today, MacLauchlan’s complaint about the novel’s voyeuristic and expletive style reveals

more about MacLauchlan's bias, than Brown's abilities as a writer. The praise applaud by Down All the Days is defined as similar to the benefit of hindsight. It can take several years to truly assess a significant work. In the same way, Christy took sixteen years to write his novel. This point is illustrated by the reaction of author John Banville, who wrote to Brown after the novel was published. He wrote:

"I must admit that I opened it nervously, expecting the worst. However, now that I have read Down All the Days I find that it is in my opinion an extraordinary and beautiful book. Certainly chapter sixteen is the loveliest piece of prose I've seen for a long time. Anyway, let me just say that I think Down All the Days is a brilliant book, one that perhaps will help Irish writing get away from the dire cabbage it seems to produce over and over again these days".

Banville now regards his letter to Brown as "patronising" and say Down All the Days is a "wonderful book — but not great". Despite his reservations, this novel is a gritty portrayal of disability and the taboos of mid-twentieth century Ireland. It is a testament to Brown's literary abilities and his honesty as writer. Although it was never filmed, Peter Sheridan turned it into an unsuccessful play, in 1981.

Christy Brown's American friend cum lover Beth Moore, with whom he lived in Connecticut. She wrote a series of typed letters written over a period of some twenty years (1950s to 1970s). She wrote on 17 September 1969 when she heard that the book had been accepted for publication: "You did it, kid, just as I always knew you would, and said you would, if you can remember. I can't tell you how proud I am, to know you, and to have been even a little part in this. You've got to finish part II. I insist because I'm dying to see what you will make of me in it". Georgina Hambleton, Brown's biographer described how their love affair later formed the subject of *A Shadow on summer*, as real love-letters, which were written with passion and animation. Sometimes without Christy's side of the correspondence, may be reputedly lost or destroyed, they offer considerable place into their lives.

Christy Brown was an accomplished writer. He wrote at length about his disability. He can be compared with Helen Keller. He influenced synchronous protagonists like Christopher Nolan. Today he is more commonly known for the biopic directed by Jim Sheridan than his works. While talking about Ireland's literary heritage, if we do not consider Brown's literary talents, this would be treated as a grievous error. Disability is defined in various manners, i.e. the definition of disability changes over the years, which has been explained by legal definitions and theoretical models. It is also considered that the people having disabilities are unable to meet perceptions of abled persons. Although, the members of the CRPD concluded that there is no definite definition of disability, one can disable by body and one can be psychological.

Conclusion:

In *Down All the Days*, Christy deftly explains the oppressive and suppressive experiences of people with and without disabilities and also enlighten how a person with disability can be oppressed and suppressed because of their sexuality Brown achieved many of his goals during his life. He married, he wrote several successful books and collections of poetry. His works were critically lauded at home and abroad. He was able to use his earnings to buy the Brown family home in Kimmage and provide for his mother, after his father died. His writings reveal a deep unhappiness. While growing up, he struggled with his perception of his body and he even questioned if he could contribute to society.

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