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Auszug aus:

Hansberry - A Raisin' in the Sun - Characterisations

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Thema:

Lorraine Hansberry *A Raisin in the Sun* – Characterisations

TMD: 30722

Kurzvorstellung des Materials:

- *A Raisin in the Sun* belongs to the classic American plays. It deals with a black family in the 1950s trying to improve their living conditions. The ambiguity of hope and resignation is underlying the play.
- The main characters in *A Raisin in the Sun* are the members of the Younger family. Ruth, Walter, Beneatha and Lena are complex characters with different expectations and attitudes.

Übersicht über die Teile

- Die Hauptcharaktere des Stücks – Lena, Walter, Ruth und Beneatha – werden im Folgenden beschrieben und analysiert.

Information zum Dokument

- Ca. 5,5 Seiten, Größe ca. 72,5 KByte

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we lost it...but we have...I – I'm sorry about this new baby, Walter. I guess maybe I better go on and do what I started...I guess I just didn't realize how bad things was with us" (p.87). She recognises that their love has gone lost in years of financial and social problems. Walter understands her and tries to talk to her: "It's been rough, ain't it, baby? I guess between two people there ain't never as much understood as folks generally thinks there is. I mean like between me and you – How we gets to the place where we scared to talk softness to each other" (p.88). Finally, they talk about their feelings and Ruth recognises "There ain't so much between us, Walter... Not when you come to me and try to talk to me" (p.88). In this moment of honesty, closeness and emotions they seem to forget their problems and reconcile.

Being shocked when realizing that Lena bought a house in a white area, Ruth recovers faster than the others. Her desire to leave the hated apartment is stronger than her fear and she starts looking forward to moving: "If this is my time in life – MY TIME – to say good-bye – to these goddamned cracking walls! [...] then I say it loud and good, HALLELUJAH! AND GOOD-BYE MISERY" (p.93-94). She is excited and her life seems to have improved abruptly. She and Walter even went to the movies "and we held hands" (p.111) like a young couple. Moreover, she decided to keep the baby (p.140). This hopeful scene is disturbed by Lindner and shortly after his visit by Walter's confessing that he lost the insurance money. Ruth is shocked but as Lena thinks about cancelling the move her emotions burst out of her: "We got to get OUT OF HERE" (p.140). She definitely wants to leave. To her, moving symbolises a new start with an unborn child and her recovered love to Walter. When they finally leave the apartment she is still excited: "LET`S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE" (p.149).

Ruth is the one profiting the most from moving and starting new in Clybourne Park since she was the one who suffered most from their living conditions. Her personality has been broken by poverty and hopelessness but as a young woman she surely will recover under changed circumstances.

Walter is "a lean, intense young man in his middle thirties, inclined to quick nervous movements and erratic speech habits – and always in his voice there is a quality of indictment" (p.25). He seems to be rather unfriendly and bad-tempered. He smokes, drinks alcohol and runs after dubious business ideas. He is frustrated of being poor and working as a chauffeur for a rich white man without having achieved financial independence himself. He tries to overcome their poverty by investing and thus gaining a lot of money. His current plan is to invest his father's insurance money in a liquor store.

Since his wife Ruth disapproves of his ideas he accuses her of not fulfilling her duty to support her husband: "You couldn't be on my side that long for nothing, could you? [...] A man needs for a woman to back him up" (p.32). He seems to have a rather conservative and disrespectful image of women: "We one group of men tied to a race of women with small minds" (p.35). Moreover, he feels disturbed by his little sister studying to be a doctor. Maybe he does not want a woman to achieve more than he did. He wants Beneatha to be thankful for Lena helping her financially but at the same time he seems to disapprove the plan to pay her school fees with the insurance money: "Have we figured out yet exactly how much medical school is going to cost" (p.36)? He does not regard medicine as proper subject for a girl and advises her to "be a nurse like other women – or just get married and be quiet" (p.38). Obviously, he is quite conservative as he expresses his dislike towards emancipated women.



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