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A NARRATIVE WITHIN A NARRATIVE: EXPLORING THE OVERRIDING IMPACT OF BIOGRAPHY IN THE BYATTIAN REALM

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ABSTRACT

Byatt strives to relate the intrinsic allusions with self-cognizance, captivating, aesthetic analogies that are not associated reasonably as she is bothered with the facts of construction and reconstruction of the individuality and is also properly cognizant of the inherent motifs for self examination in the mundane linguistic articulation and thus she is capable of explicating convictions on cogitations regarding biography, artistry, originality and individuality through emphatic fresh methods. As Byatt investigates several concerns in *The Biographer's Tale*, there seems to be no conjectural unanimity on the affinity in the domain of characteristic traits or the person as an object of study amid the two categories as highlighted in most of the modern fictive works and biographies. Being a fiction which appears to be an contradiction of Byatt's Booker Prize achieving work, *Possession: A Romance*, *The Biographer's Tale* begins up at the very point where the previous one ends. Byatt's affinity with the terminology of possession is as complicated as her association to the literary tradition of biography as is implicit through her production of the fiction on constructing biography and demonstrates her disinclination to be seized over by her object of study as she pronounces on biography as a retention, shortly after *The Biographer's Tale* and asserts that the biographer's propensity to confirm the proclivity of his object of study and to encompass the biographer are both the expanses of biographical possession. The paper attempts to underscore the very elements of biography of Destry Scholes as it appears to take a significant place in the life of the biographer, Phineas Nanson and through the very depiction of intertextuality, it strives to evince and gauge the hold of biography as a genre as we observe one individual's life overriding the other's.

Keywords: Biography, possession, convictions, construction, intertextuality

INTRODUCTION

Byatt has the capability of letting the comprehensive peruser's psyche revolving by constructing microcosmic universe within the cosmic ones as well as realms brimming with invigorating characters and intriguing ideas in her

last few fictive works that comprises of the prize winning novel *Possession: A Romance* published in 1990 and *Babel Tower* published in 1996. As her fiction, *The Biographer's Tale* carry us into many real terrains, we cognize the extreme outreach of the tremendously talented British novelist, Antonia Susan Byatt, that is far beyond the grip of other

writers. The narrative progresses as the narrator, Phineas G. Nanson, who is a postgraduate young Englishman with a huge cognition and genuinely introspective mind to ascertain the enclosed literary domain in the contemporary day graduation studies though he is minute in loftiness, and his denomination gleans out from the Latin name for gnome and specifies his edifying inclination. The very instant Phineas leave behind his education and abdicate from his courses at the reference of a empathetic educator, and fixes his mind to emerge as a biographer of an immensely au courant Scholes Destry Scholes who is meagerly recognized but a biographer himself, the plot actualizes up in the tale. Phineas is directed off to the confinements of two particularly divergent and alluring female who are significant in their own manner, while he moves on the quest of proof for his freshly undertaken endeavour and thus encounters few intensely intriguing circumstances in analytical study as well as his very existence. The ultimate thought contemplated by Phineas transforms his entirety and he gets appointed for a worki at Puck's Girdle, a tourist firm executed by two merry Scandinavian fellows, Erik and Christopher, who expertise in utopic holidays for passengers with artistic enthusiasm, to assist him while he ventures into his interpretative strife.

Nanson uncovers several astonishing disintegrated file cards and palimpsest and scripts when he confronts his Scholes' gorgeous and appealing niece, Vera Alphage, after he posts a broadcast in the Time Literary Supplement to initiate his introspective examinations. The perusers are shifted into the a different pre-historic platform with the dramatic existence of the Norwegian dramatist while they went through the scripts the realms sustaining amidst the realms metamorphosed into a fantastic leisure for Phineas. These are the cosmos which constitutes of Darwin's cousin, the British scientist, Francis Galton, the Swedish naturalist, Linnaeus and the playwright, Henrik Ibsen, which Destry Scholes brings into regard for creating documents for prospective biographies. Nanson gets himself affixed to the Swedish etymologist Fulla Biefid, the golden and disheveled and curly haired female, who is

dexterous on stag beetles and bees, as he was on his exploration of seeking information regarding Destry Scholes. Intriguing and amusing twists materializes as Nanson quests for the documents after he receives a huge load of labour accomplished even when he was managing the outlet at Puck Girdle's and at the similar moment lingering in bed with Vera. Nanson's captivating encounter with the other female, Fulla reminisce him of a Picasso statue with breasts protruding forth and posterior propelling towards the back. The biography of the Victorian scholar, fighter, methodist, strategist, fiction, composer and rhymmer, Sir Elmer Pole was the principal matter of the biographical writing of Destry Scholes which was regarded as his masterpiece who was selected by Nanson to toil on his biography and this is the elemental ground that guides him to an expanse of self-investigation about the profession of framing on other individual's existence and the self. As Nanson discerns scattered pieces after questing for information on three men drafted in Destry Scholes' world: Francis Galton, Henrik Ibsen and Carl Linnaeus, the fictive account achieves entanglements by means of the distinct stratums and it is through these captivating and evasive remnants that the peruser eventually recognizes the individuality of these embodiments. Byatt receives the chance to familiarize every ramification on the contemporary notion of psychoanalytical biography after undertaking smacks at post-structural literary commentary and thus interrogates the entire concern of biographical precision and also infiltrates the emancipation of Destry Scholes who introduces illusory specifics and conjures up falsified episodes through the disclosure created by Nanson. Byatt substantiates her general engrossment with insect mythical notions, transformation, phantasm and sexual roles to resonate through her motif of duplicates and spirits and even extends the setting through the reflecting demonstrations manifesting Nanson's endearing attraction for two female companions akin to Elmer Bole's marital ties to two female.

Phineas Nanson's self existence takes on a fantasy narrative and he emerges to be the beloved of his Scholes' niece, Vera Alphage as well as Fulla Biefeld, while he uncovers the Swedish bee

taxonomist, Fulla along with her vehemence of straw blonde hair and mundane fragrance and Vera as the stable, discordant person, as he quests for the actual Destry Scholes. In Byatt's endeavours, cravings for carnal accomplishment and adoration are correlated to cognitive pleasures as is portrayed through the exotic and idealistic feats of the immensely genius dispositions. Phineas transforms into a character from an arid, anxious and insignificant person as the narrative proceeds and by dint of the character of Fulla who is being contrasted to the productivity and the brightness of the sun and Vera with that of the water, the pleasant hues and the moon, manifests the emblazing difference betwixt the two female in the affectionate realm of existence of Nanson and thus purely concedes by Coleridge's utterance in accordance to whom the delight was the most significant essentiality of the intention of art. Both with a radiologist and a taxonomist, Nanson undergoes dual endearing ties as he is conscripted into the correlative natural associations and carnal peripheral of vitality. Phineas is empowered to deal with his intrinsic self as the generally imperceptible cosmos of the inherent physique is disclosed to Phineas through the radiologist, Vera. Phineas witnesses the reliance of humane existence on a dainty environs that is barely discontinued by the theorists to regard their departure into the pragmatic essence of survival with the assistance of Fulla who is preoccupied with bees and butterflies.

By allocating hints and crucial components that sustained in the edifying venture of Phineas, Fulla and Vera functioned as a medium, who, by their carnal associations with Phineas assisted him in the to attain his purpose of constructing the biographical account of Destry Scholes. Several episodes assert the sentimental and physical maneuvering and elicitation of Fulla and Vera by Phineas Nanson. As Phineas uncovers the chronicle and the biographical account as a thing that is repugnant in scholarly structures and contemporarily outmoded, he elucidates that he does not possess any desire to draft a historical account, amidst the construction of a narrative blended with the expeditions he got involved in. He is persuaded and assured of the veritable truth that

it is the outlet for an amplifying domains, for diminishing colossal embodiments, for inconceivable horror and inaccessible gracefulness that the actual scholarly devotee and reader is searching for and not the reflection and as the *modus operandi* permits him to articulate out several vociferations, it is for the objective of accuracy that he is scripting in the initial personality. Nanson informs us that Destry Scholes incorporated within himself the aboriginal righteousness and the capability to construct up a universe in each nook of which his peruser would desire to witness and to comprehend and thus allow the readers to discern the conception that despite making logicity of elements and correlating their significance with the condition that entire sensuality cannot be derived due to the constraints of meagre elements similar to that of annihilation and insensitive and impregnated acumen.

Just at the very instant when we discover about Destry Scholes along with the three ancient personages on whom he was investigating, we are made conscious of the contemporary strifles of Phineas Nanson to reveal the evidences regarding the individuals, the female, the travels within the vital existence of Destry Scholes. We detect a single narrative reverberating with another we observe a conviction on Phineas by means of his technique and intense ardour and in the same manner about Destry Scholes, through his mode of exploration and his objects of study and thus, we are allocated with a matter of interrelated and intricate tales. A theoretical framework of attributes by means of the rumination on the distinctiveness of an individual is constructed by the fictional writers inherently or externally through the reconstruction of the objects of study by the biographers and the reframing of characters and by manner of this we witness the divergence amidst a revisited existence and an experienced living foregrounded on various subsisted arbitrary hints, and are notified of the framework on which biographers rent out their endeavour through the scanty and insufficient facts and the disintegrated essence of antiquity. Byatt strives to relate the intrinsic allusions with self-cognizance, captivating, aesthetic analogies that are not associated reasonably as she is bothered with the facts of construction and reconstruction of the

individuality and is also properly cognizant of the inherent motifs for self examination in the mundane linguistic articulation and thus she is capable of explicating convictions on cogitations regarding biography, artistry, originality and individuality through emphatic fresh methods. As Byatt investigates several concerns in *The Biographer's Tale*, there seems to be no conjectural unanimity on the affinity in the domain of characteristic traits or the person as an object of study amid the two categories as highlighted in most of the modern fictive works and biographies. Being a fiction which appears to be an contradiction of Byatt's Booker Prize achieving work, *Possession: A Romance*, *The Biographer's Tale* begins up at the very point where the previous one ends. Nanson flounders to find even the utmost fundamental fact regarding the biographer on whose existential narrative he is engaged and his endeavour to draft on the biographer's vital essence ends agonizingly, contrary to the graduate Roland Mitchell in *Possession: A Romance*, who creates a sequence of unanticipated exploration on the existence of a Victorian poet, Randolph Henry Ash, and thus contrives a prospective twist as he acquires real adoration, employment opportunities and cognitive pleasure by means of his trudging research attempt. Being a scholarly and unimaginative and far beyond the illusion of intellectual optimization of desires, as Nanson detects himself entwined with more catechisms on his object's distinctiveness and purpose through the palimpsest he has acquired, and thus frames the fiction a script of hindered fantasies, yearning, course of progress and exploratory study through the disappointed, ineffectual and significant denouement of the scholarly belletristic work, being incapable to evaluate the facts, contrary to *Possession: A Romance*, which structures itself as an alluring amorous tale.

Portraying a discordant alacrity to elide out of biography into novel, Nanson grasps that the object of his exploratory insight was himself a dexterous agent and also contrives that to create sensibility he should maneuver his work. Both acquiring, nor acknowledging the immense domain of antiquity, *The Biographer's Tale* progresses at a

concealed stratum of analogy and does not recreate the antiquity of biography and thus, emphasizes upon the factor of the aspect of meticulous ability and consciousness ought to be attained by the academic litterateurs which materializes to be a distinct facet of biographical possessiveness. Nanson appears to be influenced by the illusory biography to emerge as the biographer's biographer and thus obscures the element and form of an autobiography on drafting a biography of a writer, unsuccessful ecclesiastic person, proficient artisan, Fredrick Rolfe in *The Quest for Corvo* (1934) by A.J.A. Symon.

Filing the biography, the desire, imaginary, gentle and circumspect examination of the writers' existence and the exploration that moves ahead to the individuals who procreated the works upon which scholarly commentators extend their enigmatic vigour, from the reclining digressive domain of the textual world, and thus separating the contemporary English segment from the utmost significant genre, the fiction, *The Biographer's Tale* incorporates the essential, suppressed and immensely undecipherable aspects of a biographical senselessness and thus proffers out the very intriguing inferences in scholarly endeavours by providing the channels only accessible to the reader formerly in ownership of the chronicling of biography in a fictive work frequented by those citations. Referring the aggravating repudiation of the writer through the denial of English, Byatt discerns a horrific familial affinity in the text protruding out in modern times, which appears not at all enthralling to the perusers who deviates from the contemporary involvement of scholarly perusals and introspection that disavows anything to be inclined for. Exhilarating the creativity greater than any poetical writer or fictional artist who can disseminate us with the concept that extinct and refers, the productive and constructive conviction, by structuring the entire sphere to render the extraneous, by conferring us the genuine information and by moving the small from the great, to premeditate the systematic flavour of biography, Virginia Woolf composed the terminology of creative facts, several decades after. Biography being a symbol of dramatic ineptitude and contradictory to the grounds of the bereavement of

the writer, deliberate misconception, the acceleration of poststructural distrust towards the conviction of comprehensible person and not just the onward information, there is a persistent contra distinct wave of the scholarly biography to the supreme judgmental conceptions that highlights the author's affinity to his work and an intense disgust to the literary tradition can be clearly observed through the heightened cannibalism of biography in Rudyard Kipling and the plagiarism related to the psyche in the terminologies pronounced by Vladimir Nabokov as being the contrary points of scholarly ruminative array, biography and theoretical frameworks acquire the despicable position of the backdrop on one aspect and succor the literary realm in the amelioration of literary introspective study on the other. Regarded as advantageous abridgment of elemental originating element, biographies, though have fermented emphatically for decades, are way adrift from creativity and preliminary endeavours of academics being no actual, allocated dint of facts that might be necessary to any accountable calumniator foundation or a feasible core in its own privilege, has no interpretation flowing in scholarly spheres as it is constructed on the belief that existence can be acknowledged and thus augments the ostensible theoretical exiguity of the literary tradition. Being the enormous analogy of conception of the scholarly existence that concerns so less, *The Biographer's Tale* strives to question the reduced and crude cognitive position of biography, to deal with the competent principles and to contrive that by including biography to the interpretative domain, instructive capability and drafting what might be attained, and thus postures an analysis of literary assessment and functions as a capable narrative to the calamitous familial depiction disturbing modern literary critical theories as Byatt requests us to contemplate deeper on biography but does not claims *The Biographer's Tale* as an altercation for biography.

Byatt reconnoiters a tale on the divergent and coinciding functions of the individual studied on and writer, junctions of reality and imagination as she negotiates with Phineas's explorations into the actual cosmos in *The Biographer's Tale* and scripts

the transformative questions, unreasonable self allusions and precipitous discontentment with post modernism while it is the procedure of conceptualizing characters, significance of delight in literary universe and the general human longing for narratives that she highlights in the tale about tale. Indulging in intense devotion to obliterate himself from the archives of discovery, Phineas moves ahead to explore the existential vitality of Destry Scholes though he reveals very scantily about Scholes and discerns that actuality can be ambiguous as connotation and being fascinated by the truancy of the biographer himself from the text, acquires the elements on Destry Scholes by a chance event, bit undesirably in his own narrative, in an unsettled trend. Phineas views himself following a distinct channel of inquisition with each predicament as it is the perplexing prominence on spiritualism and supernatural, on the demeanour and categorization of animals and on lonely and eccentric journeying that correlate each combination of trait distinctively and makes Phineas barren and bewildered during the preparatory introspections into Destry Scholes while he glares at the house in Pontrefact and discloses only the disintegrated enticing outline on the Statistician and Eugenias, Francis Galton, the taxonomist, Linnaeus and the dramatist, Ibsen. Phineas sees himself crude, impeded and hindered and attains greatly or meagerly as he observes as he comprehends the genuine cognitive ardour for consistency and signification and thus Byatt places the residue of the fiction upon complacency. Right from the very instant when Nanson begins on a reticent and passionate association with Destry Scholes' niece, the strikingly graceful Vera Alphage and moves to her attic where he witnesses her uncle's instrument, a stream of eerie conglomerated pictures and many haphazardly arranged marbles, a suitcase brimming with inquisitiveness and also at the very instant when he encounters the Swedish bee and taxonomist, Fulla, who allures him as they observe stag beetles in Richmond park and assists him out with Linnaean, Phineas's whatsoever empty existence instantaneously becomes infiltrated with fresh opportunities as he observes the gruesome expanse stimulating and condensing at every twist

but yet he is unable to be absolutely assured of the episodes of his own existence as this is the sole element that he keeps outside his regard. Phineas's biography of Destry Scholes arrives no adjacent to its beginning juncture and his nights appeared to be a series of haunting and flagrant hallucinations and the day time materialized to be a snarl of uncertainty as he confronts a couple of decadent homosexuals arranging fascinating vacations on literary motifs and an intimidating customer desiring him to organize an excursion of films, while he began toiling at an substitute travel organization known as Puck's Girdle. As Phineas's comprehension of genuineness thoroughly transforms by the consummation of the fiction, he relinquishes the conviction of information and agrees emerging as greatly scheming and strategic and employing provocative expressions to vent out his hopelessness of information while his explicatory account in an accelerating manner becomes gratifying to senses and figurative and eventually reaches its extremity as a misleading author though Byatt portrays him as the one who is impeccable at the very onset of the novel.

By means of a conscientious consolidation of the anomalies of mundane scholarly existence and catalogues of chronicles, Byatt proffers enticingly strange brushes in her work and reveals the fundamental method of contriving in *The Biographer's Tale*, by selecting Galloen, Linnaeus and Ibsen being bereft of any good cause than to discern regarding them herself and thus accumulates the oddities that create them the personages and the chance occurrences that make them entirely humane after examining and introspectively contemplating on the three people. Byatt's individuals only appear to exist when the character is able to move beyond the actuals and are the blends of human attributes derived from several origins. The fiction is dexterously planned or less adroitly imagined and is a greatly amusing work in spite of its contra distinct ephemerality and thus is assuredly a creative literary sport taking into regard the dilemmas of a biography with the splendid manner of Byatt's composition. Byatt, being a romantic writer whom we should be reluctant to do without, mixes her ponderously

structured exquisitely laden prose with her extraordinarily ingenious comprehension of the issues and portrays the net of deceit that hinges within the fictive as well as non-fictive accounts and thus mark the reality of transcribing a mass biography into a cursory jumble of disclosure and conjecture by interrogating the concept of literary immaculateness. Instead of being self cognizant, *The Biographer's Tale* shifts like a fantasy being preoccupied with information and attending to irony as well as an imaginative fable as the scholarly Byattian endeavours on her own fictional artistry and creativity and expresses that she could create a disposition who has been a manifestation of anyone sustaining or bereaved, through the essential structuring of the fiction's form as it is persistently exaggerated, which has been superlatively depicted in multifarious manner in *The Biographer's Tale*.

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