

Plot Summary

A raisin in the sun is a play about the Younger family who is struggling in poverty on the south side of Chicago. In the opening of the play, a death in their family had occurred and they receive an insurance check of \$10,000.00. The family members have different ideas and plans for what they wish to do with the life insurance money. The mother of the family wished to purchase a house with the money, what her and her husband had wished to do. Her son Walter Lee wished to invest in a liquor store instead.

As the play goes further the Young's begin to conflict about their different wishes. Walter Lee gives over half the money to a "friend" he trusted, named Willy Harris, and he ran off with \$6,500.00, he told Walter it was needed to invest in the liquor store. Walter Lee's wife Ruth becomes pregnant and agrees with the mother of the family. Beneatha the sister wants to use the money for medical school tuition.

At the end of the play, the Younger's eventually move out of the apartment, and into an upper class neighbor hood. Their future seems uncertain and slightly dangerous, but they are optimistic and determined to live a better life. They knew they could succeed if they stuck together as a family and decided to postpone their dreams no longer.

Characters

- Walter Lee Younger the son
- Beneatha Younger ("Bennie")- the daughter
- Lena Younger Mama
- Ruth Younger sons wife
- Travis Younger- the sons child
- Joseph Asagai Nigerian student in love with Beneatha
- George Murchison African who peruses Beneatha
- Mr. Karl Lindner-
- Bobo- one of Walters partners with the liquor store plan
- Willy Harris- Walters friend
- Mrs. Johnson neighbor

Themes, Motifs, and Symbols

The value and purpose of dreams

 Throughout the story, each family member has a dream of their own, and in the end they discover that the house is the most important dream because it unites the family.

The need to fight racial discrimination

- When Mr. Linder tries to bribe the family into not moving into the white neighbor hood, the family stood up to him with defiance and strength.

Throughout the play the youngers go through social and economic hardships. Walter realizes what kind of friend he had when he stole money from him and Beneatha disclaims Walter but in the end the family gets together and buy the dream home

The home is the reoccurring scene in the play. It shows how the play pretty much revolves around the household. Throughout the play there are times when the lights would change to show the different moods.

The eggs that Ruth makes for breakfast every morning symbolizes her support that she has for her husband. She provides him with nourishment in the same predictable way everyday

In the middle of the play, when Beneatha meets Agasai, she cuts her straight hair and decides to go natural in order to show off her natural African beauty, embracing her heritage.

In Depth Characterization

- Walter- the plot of the story revolves around him and the actions that he takes. Most of the mistakes he make in life take a terrible toll on the family, however by his mistakes he evolves into a man at the end of the story and becomes the heroic figure in the family.
- Mama- the head of the household who nourishes the family. She demands that the family respect themselves and take pride in their dreams. She stands up for her beliefs and provides perspective from an older generation. She believes in striving to succeed while still maintaining her moral boundaries
- Beneatha- provides a young black female perspective, who searches for her identity. She thinks she is an independent lady in the beginning of the story and then it dawns on her that she is really living off of her fathers insurance. She later on appreciates her brother in the end by recognizing his strength and appreciating his manhood.