

Guidelines

1. Name of novel/author/publishers.
2. Price/number of pages/cover/illustrations.
3. Type of novel – fiction/non-fiction - historical/romantic/classic/adventure/horror.
4. The plot – realistic, simple, action-packed.
5. Style – easy, heavy, fast, slow.
6. Content.
7. Characters – their relevance in the story.
8. Overall effect and appeal.
9. Message or moral conveyed, if any.

Half a Life

Born in Trinidad in 1932, Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul, is the author of more than fourteen works of fiction as well as non-fiction.

'Half a Life', the novel which fetched V.S. Naipaul the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2001, is a masterpiece and is sure to leave a significant impression on the readers. The 228 paged fiction is published by Picador and is priced at Rs. 395/-. The eye-catching cover illustration is by 'The Image Bank'.

Based in the 1930's, the story, *Half A Life* begins on a potentially depressing note in a State of India, which is unaffected by the turbulence caused by the freedom movement. Willie Chandran's father hails from a line of priests and being a rebellious person, he responds to the Mahatma's call by boycotting his university and living out a life of sacrifice by marrying a low-caste woman. This unhappy union leads to the emergence of Willie Chandran, who leads a life where he is deprived of the security of a parental home. However, happiness came his way in the form of a scholarship to a university in London. It is in London that Willie meets various people and tries to re-create himself, his past and his ancestry in order to gain acceptance.

He makes many friends and it is only when people begin to walk in and out of his life that Willie discovers the darkest side of his character. A very realistic character, Willie is insecure, fickle-minded and a person who is afraid to face the blatant truth about his life. Extremely whimsical, Willie is a very humane personality.

However, it is Ana, the last ray of hope in Willie's life, who provides him with the fulfillment he has always longed for.

It is the ponderous and expressive style of the novel which appeals to the reader. The novel is a work of exceptional grace, sensitivity and humour. Naipaul's style of writing is simple but effective. An extremely compelling and a thought-provoking novel, *Half A Life* is bound to leave the readers enthralled and captivated. It will definitely appeal to those, who believe with full conviction that an expression of emotions is imperative in all human relationships.

It is a 'must read' for those who believe that life has a far greater depth and meaning and life is not just about 'existing' but about 'living'.