# Half and Half by Amy Tan Review

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Through her Half and Half narrative, Amy Tan describes 2 characters - namely, Rose Hsu Jordan and Ted Jordan - as experiencing marital and emotional problems. These problems emanate from the characters' wrong decisions as well as from the influence of fate. For example, fate is depicted as causing Rose and Ted's marital problems because the 2 defy their parent's opposition to the 2 people getting married. Erroneous decisions also make the 2 characters to experience problems. To illustrate, Rose suffers serious emotional hurt after she fails to watch over Bing - her youngest brother - thus leading to the latter's death by drowning. In addition, after marrying Ted, Rose allows the husband to unilaterally make all decisions, with the wife always playing second fiddle. This wrong decision works against Rose when Ted requires her to take up part of his roles. Ted is also explained to be making wrong decisions that harm him by losing all his confidence after an unsuccessful court case. Eventually, the couple's wrong decisions make them to become bitter toward each other, with Ted asking for a divorce. All in all, through the Half and Half story. Tan shows that the characters of Rose and Ted are victims of their wrong decisions as well as their individual fates owing to their racial disparities.

To illustrate, Rose and Ted disregard their parents' race-based objections to the couple's proposed marriage, thus depicting fate and wrong decisions jointly facilitating the characters' downfall. Mrs Jordan -Ted's mother - uses carefully-concealed racist sentiments to express her displeasure regarding her son's marriage to Rose. Likewise, An-mei Hsu - Rose's mother - voices her dissatisfaction with regard to Rose marrying Ted. The 2 youngsters however defy such parental discontent and go ahead to wed. In line with their parents' premonition, cracks appear in Rose and Ted's marriage soon after Ted loses a court case that has to do with some professional malpractice he committed (Perkins and Barbara 817). Consequently, Ted becomes depressed and loses his confidence. The racial disparities regarding mores then come to the fore. Rose does not offer Ted the necessary consolation as this is not appropriate in her Chinese culture. In turn, Ted abandons some of his decision-making responsibilities; he has been making all decisions. Rose refuses to take over some of her husband's decision-making duties because her culture does not allow her to do so. Eventually, Ted asks Rose for a divorce, a request that stuns the wife. Tan thus uses the couple's varied

# **Half And Half By Amy Tan**

**Elinor Lipman** 

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