

# Pigeons at Daybreak

**B.A. I**  
**(English)**

by

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# Pigeons at Daybreak

(Chapter: 1)



# MAIN POINTS

- Anita Mazumdar Desai
- Characters in the Story
- Theme of the Story
- Story in Brief
- Short-Answer Type Questions
- Long-Answer Type Questions

# Anita Mazumdar Desai



# Anita Desai

- Born on 24 June, 1937 at Mussoorie (India)
- Educated at Delhi University
- A Novelist, Short-story writer and Children's author
- Professor of Humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Shortlisted for the Booker Prize (three times)
- Received Sahitya Akademi Award in 1978 for her novel *Fire on the Mountain* (1977)
- Won the 'British Guardian Prize' for *The Village by the Sea* (1982)

# Characters in the Story

- Main Characters:
  1. Amul Basu:
    - i) Husband of Otima
    - ii) A patient of asthma
  2. Otima Basu: A very caring wife
- Other Characters:
  1. Bullu (Neighbour of Amul and Otima)
  2. Nikhil (Grandson of Amul and Otima)

# Theme of the Story

- Psychological suffering of the husband (Amul Basu)
- Loyalty of the wife (Otima Basu)

# Story in Brief

- “Pigeons at Daybreak” is one of the most significant short stories written by Anita Desai, an Indian English short story writer and novelist.
- Amul Basu and Otima Basu are husband and wife.
- Mr Basu was not able to read the newspaper himself because of his poor eyesight and illness.
- Otima used to read the newspaper for him.

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# Story in Brief

- **Otima** had a selfless love for **Amul Basu**.
- One day, **Otima** read out the news about the electricity-cut in their area on **May 21**.
- He felt uneasy and worried after hearing this news and had **an attack of asthma**.
- She **took care** of him during the attack and asked him to take rest.
- With the help of **Bullu**, she shifted his bed to the terrace.

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# Story in Brief

- On that night, they stayed on the rooftop.
- He thought about **Nikhil**, his grandson.
- When **electricity** came, **Amul** refused to go back inside the flat.
- **Basu** realized that his end was near.
- At the end, **he dies**.
- **The flight of pigeons**, thus, becomes a **symbolic representation** of **Amul's death** and the journey of his spirit to the next world i.e. **Heaven**.

# Short-Answer Type Questions

- Discuss the relevance of the title.
- Assess the relationship of the old couple.
- Comment on Anita Desai's prose style.
- Write a brief character sketch of Otima Basu.
- Write a short note on the ending of the story.

# Long-Answer Type Questions

- Bring out the theme of the story “Pigeons at Daybreak”.
- Write a brief character-sketch of Amul Basu.
- What happens to Amul Basu when he hears the news about electricity cut?

THANKS