



Movie Review: A Beautiful Mind



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“Schizophrenia, derived from the words schizein (to split) and phren (mind), is a mental disorder in which a person cannot differentiate between reality and his imagination. With a worldwide occurrence of 0.32%, schizophrenia might not be the most common mental illness but has been widely featured in art, music, literature and movies. One such movie is A Beautiful Mind which is based on the biography of **John Nash – a brilliant mathematician.**



With four Academy Awards and an 8.2 IMDb rating, this movie has won millions of hearts across the globe. The story begins with John Nash entering the Princeton University in 1947 via the prestigious

Carnegie scholarship. Confident to the point of arrogance, Nash begins his search for something new and innovative for his doctorate. He succeeds in doing so by proving Smith's theory of governing dynamics in economics incomplete

which grants him a research position in MIT. His intelligence is recognised and he is offered a classified job to decode the hidden messages used by the Russians to communicate. He falls in love with his student Alicia Larde, whom he later on marries. Life seems to be looking good for him till his spiral into paranoia begins.

Nash is convinced that his work has made him the enemy of the Russians. Every stranger in a black coat and hat makes him fear for his life. Later, when he is forcefully admitted in a psychiatric hospital, it is revealed that Nash has been suffering from schizophrenia for quite some time. His work for the government, university best friend and his niece have been nothing but a figment of his imagination. After prolonged treatment, Nash's condition improves. However, when Nash refuses to take his medication, his hallucinations return and he inadvertently hurts his son and wife. Mortified at the thought of returning to the hospital, Nash pleads for time to which his wife grudgingly agrees. She coaxes him into returning to his old university, hoping the sense of familiarity there would help him. Gradually Nash learns to ignore his hallucinations. He works on mathematical theorems, takes class and eventually is awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics for the vast implications of his equilibrium on Game Theory.

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The film portrays the struggles of a schizophrenic and the toll it takes on his loved ones beautifully. One of the most heart-warming scenes of the movie is when Nash, overcoming all his difficulties, gets the recognition he always wanted as the professors lay down their pens on his table. The humility with which he accepts it is a sharp contrast to what young Nash was. No doubt, Nash's success is commendable but it would have been impossible without his wife Alicia's help. She played a pivotal role in Nash regaining his sanity. The movie gives a glimpse of a woman tormented by her love for her husband and the guilt for wanting to leave. Despite knowing the dangers, she chooses to stay with him and believes in him. As said by Nash himself, he was who he was because of her.

“Imagine if you had suddenly learned that the people and the places and the moments most important to you were not gone, not dead but worse, had never been. What kind of hell would that be?” This quote from the movie sums up the nightmare faced by schizophrenics quite well. We cannot possibly even comprehend the pain they are going through without stepping in their shoes. Thus, the least we can do is be aware if not compassionate of their ordeals.