

# “Where There is Will”: A Tragicomedy

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**Abstract:** The phrase "Delight in the play where there is will" appears to be a thematic interpretation or a conflation of several distinct concepts found in literature and spirituality. This is a tragicomedy, often exploring themes of patriarchy and control within a Gujarati family, where a patriarch attempts to control his family even after death through a rigid will. It is a dark comedy or tragicomedy that explores family dynamics, patriarchy, and the misuse of wealth. It is a **tragicomedy** that explores the conflicts within a dysfunctional Indian family, centered around the domineering patriarch Hasmukh Mehta, who tries to control his family even after his death. While not a lighthearted comedy, the "delight" in the play comes from Dattani's sharp, witty satire of modern Indian society, dysfunctional relationships, and hypocrisy. The "tragicomedy" aspect means it offers both biting humor and serious reflection on domestic issues. In essence, the play is a "will" (document) that causes conflict, but it is "full with delight" (satiric enjoyment) for the audience as it exposes the absurdities of the characters through dramatic, and often humorous, conflict. *Where There's a Will* is a play by Mahesh Dattani that satirizes patriarchal authority and familial relationships, often highlighting the "will" (last testament) and the "delight" (or lack thereof) the characters find in maneuvering power. It refers to the "Delight of Existence," where one's conscious will aligns with the universe, transforming action into a joyous play. While the prompt mentions "full with delight," the search results indicate the play is a dark comedy or satire about patriarchal power, not a romantic or purely joyful play. However, it does explore the "delight of becoming" or finding personal freedom. *Where There's a Will* (1988), the first play by Indian playwright Mahesh Dattani, is a black comedy or **tragicomedy** that blends delight, satire, and dark themes to expose the complexities of patriarchal control and modern family dynamics. The play features a controlling patriarch, Hasmukh Mehta, who attempts to dictate his family's life from beyond the grave, leading to both comic, absurd situations and serious, emotional confrontations.

**Keywords:** The play shows that true "delight" or happiness is found when individuals break free from oppressive, patriarchal control and live on their own terms. In summary, *Where There's a Will* is considered a successful tragicomedy because it "exorcises the patriarchal code" through a mix of witty, spectral observation (delight) and the, "serious, painful unfolding of family dysfunction" (tragedy).