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ნინო თევდორაძე

THE PRINCIPLES OF TEXT ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

მხატვრული ტექსტის ანალიზისა და ინტერპრეტაციის საფუძვლები

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"The Principles of Text analysis and Interpretation" is a university-level textbook for advanced English Language learning students with a philological profile. They will be introduced to basic concepts of literary and linguistic analysis. The textbook helps them master complex study of a literary work which predisposes a variety of approaches: linguistic approach, literary approach, cultural approach, narrative analysis. Students will have the opportunity to synthesize their learning – to merge the linguistic approaches with literary and cultural studies.

The textbook is also valid for any advanced English learner and for any reader interested in literary text analysis and interpretation.

საუნივერსიტეტო სახელმძღვანელო „მხატვრული ტექსტის ანალიზისა და ინტერპრეტაციის საფუძვლები" განკუთვნილია ფილოლოგიური პროფილის სტუდენტებისათვის, რომლებიც შეისწავლიან ინგლისურ ენასა და ლიტერატურას. იგი მათ დაეხმარება შეძლონ თანამედროვე ლინგვისტური, ლიტერატურატურათმცოდნეობითი და კულტუროლოგიური კატეგორიალური სისტემების ერთმანეთთან დაკავშირება და ამ სისტემებზე დაყრდნობით მხატვრული ტექსტის კომპლექსური ანალიზი.

სახელმძღვანელო, ასევე, დახმარებას გაუწევს ინგლისური ენის ღრმად შესწავლის მსურველ ნებისმიერ პირს და მკითხველს, რომელიც ამავდროულად, დაინტერესებულია მხატვრული ტექსტის შესწავლის საკითხებით.

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Joseph Conrad was a Polish-born English novelist. He did not learn to speak English until he was in his 20's. It is truly amazing that one of the most distinguished English writers mastered English after his native language, Polish. Conrad's narrative style places him at the beginning of the Modernist period of literature.

THE LAGOON
Joseph Conrad

The white man, leaning with both arms over the roof of the little house in the stern of the boat, said to the steersman – 'We will pass the night in Arsat's **clearing**.[1] It is late.'

The **Malay**[2] only **grunted**,[3] and went on looking fixedly at the river. The white man rested his chin on his crossed arms and gazed at the wake of the boat. At the end of the straight avenue of forests cut by the intense glitter of the river, the sun appeared unclouded and dazzling, **poised**[4] low over the water that shone smoothly like a band of metal. The forests, **somber**[5] and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream. At the foot of big, towering trees, trunkless **nipa**[6] palms rose from the mud of the bank, in bunches of leaves enormous and heavy, that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of **eddies**.[7] In the stillness of the air every tree, every leaf, every bough, every tendril of creeper and every petal of minute blossoms seemed to have been **bewitched**[8] into an immobility perfect and final. Nothing moved on the river but the eight **paddles**[9] that rose flashing regularly, dipped together with a single splash; while the steersman swept right

1. An open space in a forest where there are no trees
2. Native of the Malay peninsula in Southeast Asia
3. To grunt means to make short low sound in the throat (especially to show that you are in pain)
4. Steadily in a particular position, balanced
5. Dark, sad
6. Palm trees of Asia with leaves that can be used to make a roof. Palm trees of Asia with leaves that can be used to make a roof.
7. Circular movement of air or water
8. Under magic spells
9. A short pole with a wide part at one or both ends that you use for moving a small boat

and left with a periodic and sudden **flourish**[10] of his blade describing a **glinting**[11] semicircle above his head. The **churned-up**[12] water **frothed**[13] alongside with a confused murmur. And the white man's canoe, advancing up stream in the **short-lived**[14] disturbance of its own making, seemed to enter the **portals**[15] of a land from which the very memory of motion had for ever departed.

The white man, turning his back upon the setting sun, looked along the empty and broad **expanse**[16] of the sea-reach. For the last three miles of its course the wandering, hesitating river, as if **enticed**[17] irresistibly by the freedom of an open horizon, flows straight into the sea, flows straight to the east - to the east that harbors both light and darkness. **Astern**[18] of the boat the repeated call of some bird, a cry **discordant**[19] and feeble, skipped along over the smooth water and lost itself, before it could reach the other shore, in the breathless silence of the world.

The steersman dug his paddle into the stream, and held hard with stiffened arms, his body thrown forward. The water **gurgled**[20] aloud; and suddenly the long straight reach seemed to **pivot**[21] on its center, the forests swung in a semicircle, and the **slanting**[22] beams of sunset touched the broadside of the canoe with a fiery **glow**,[23] throwing the slender and distorted shadows of its crew upon the **streaked**[24] glitter of the river. The white man turned to look ahead. The course of the boat had been altered at right-angles to the stream, and the carved dragon-head of its **prow**[25] was pointing now at a gap in the fring-

10. Wave something around in a way that makes people look at it
11. shiny
12. Milky, cloudy
13. If water froths, a mass of small bubbles appears on the surface
14. Brief, ephemeral
15. Doors, gateways
16. Area, vastness
17. charmed
18. At the back
19. inharmonious
20. Bubbled, sloshed
21. To streak means to turn, to spin around
22. Slanting, diagonal
23. Flame, blaze
24. Marked, splashed
25. Pointed front part of a boat

ing bushes of the bank. It **glided**[26] through, brushing the overhanging twigs, and disappeared from the river like some slim and amphibious creature leaving the water for its **lair**[27] in the forests.

The narrow creek was like a ditch: **tortuous**,[28] fabulously deep; filled with gloom under the thin strip of pure and shining blue of the heaven. Immense trees **soared up**,[29] invisible behind the **festooned**[30] draperies of **creepers**.[31] Here and there, near the glistening blackness of the water, a twisted root of some tall tree showed amongst the tracery of small ferns, black and dull, writhing and motionless, like an arrested snake. The short words of the paddlers reverberated loudly between the thick and somber walls of **vegetation**.[32] Darkness **oozed out**[33] from between the trees, through the tangled **maze**[34] of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstirring leaves; the darkness, mysterious and **invincible**;[35] the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests.

The men poled in the shoaling water. The creek broadened, opening out into a wide sweep of a stagnant lagoon. The forests receded from the marshy bank, leaving a level strip of bright-green, reedy grass to frame the reflected blueness of the sky. A **fleecy**[36] pink cloud drifted high above, trailing the delicate coloring of its image under the floating leaves and the silvery blossoms of the lotus. A little house, perched on high piles, appeared black in the distance. Near it, two tall nibong palms, that seemed to have come out of the forests in the background, leaned slightly over the ragged roof, with a suggestion of sad tenderness and care in the droop of their leafy and soaring heads.

The steersman, pointing with his paddle, said, 'Arsat is there. I see his canoe fast between the piles.'

26. Move smoothly
27. Den, whole, nest
28. Winding, twisted
29. rose
30. decorated
31. Climbing plant
32. Plants, flora
33. Came out of
34. labyrinth
35. unconquerable
36. Like a wool coat of a sheep

The polers ran along the sides of the boat glancing over their shoulders at the end of the day's journey. They would have preferred to spend the night somewhere else than on this lagoon of **weird**[37] aspect and ghostly reputation. Moreover, they disliked Arsat, first as a stranger, and also because he who repairs a ruined house, and dwells in it, proclaims that he is not afraid to live amongst the spirits that haunt the places abandoned by mankind. Such a man can disturb the course of fate by glances or words; while his familiar ghosts are not easy to **propitiate**[38] by casual **wayfarers**[39] upon whom they long to wreak the malice of their human master. White men care not for such things, being unbelievers and in league with the Father of Evil, who leads them unharmed through the invisible dangers of this world. To the warnings of the righteous they oppose an offensive pretence of disbelief. What is there to be done?

So they thought, throwing their weight on the end of their long poles. The big canoe glided on swiftly, noiselessly and smoothly, towards Arsat's clearing, till, in a great rattling of poles thrown down, and the loud murmurs of 'Allah be praised!' it came with a gentle knock against the **crooked**[40] piles below the house.

The boatmen with uplifted faces shouted discordantly, 'Arsat! O Arsat!' Nobody came. The white man began to climb the rude ladder giving access to the bamboo platform before the house. The **juragan**[41] of the boat said sulkily,[42] 'We will cook in the **sampan**,[43] and sleep on the water.'

'Pass my blankets and the basket,' said the white man curtly.

He knelt on the edge of the platform to receive the bundle. Then the boat shoved off, and the white man, standing up, confronted Arsat, who had come out through the low door of his hut. He was a man young, powerful, with a broad chest and muscular arms. He had nothing on but his sarong. His head was bare. His big, soft eyes stared

37. Strange, odd
38. appease
39. A person who travels from one place to another (usually on foot)
40. bent
41. Captain, master
42. Crossly, resentfully
43. Small flat-bottomed boat with a cabin

eagerly at the white man, but his voice and demeanor were composed as he asked, without any words of greeting – 'Have you medicine, Tuan?'

'No,' said the visitor in a startled tone.

'No. Why? Is there sickness in the house?'

'Enter and see,' replied Arsat, in the same calm manner, and turning short round, passed again through the small doorway. The white man, dropping his bundles, followed.

In the dim light of the dwelling he made out on a couch of bamboos a woman stretched on her back under a broad sheet of red cotton cloth. She lay still, as if dead; but her big eyes, wide open, glittered in the gloom, staring upwards at the slender **rafters**,[44] motionless and unseeing. She was in a high fever, and evidently unconscious. Her cheeks were sunk slightly, her lips were partly open, and on the young face there was the ominous and fixed expression – the absorbed, contemplating expression of the unconscious who are going to die. The two men stood looking down at her in silence.

'Has she been long ill?' asked the traveler.

'I have not slept for five nights,' answered the Malay, in a deliberate tone. 'At first she heard voices calling her from the water and struggled against me who held her. But since the sun of to-day rose she hears nothing - she hears not me. She sees nothing. She sees not me – me!'

He remained silent for a minute, then asked softly –

'Tuan, will she die?'

'I fear so,' said the white man sorrowfully. He had known Arsat years ago, in a far country in times of trouble and danger, when no friendship is to be despised. And since his Malay friend had come unexpectedly to dwell in the hut on the lagoon with a strange woman, he had slept many times there, in his journeys up or down the river. He liked the man who knew how to keep faith in council and how to fight without fear by the side of his white friend. He liked him - not so much perhaps as a man likes his favorite dog - but still he liked him well enough to help and ask no questions, to think sometimes vaguely and

44. sloping pieces of wood that support a roof

hazily[45] in the midst of his own pursuits, about the lonely man and the long-haired woman with audacious[46] face and triumphant eyes, who lived together hidden by the forests - alone and feared.

The white man came out of the hut in time to see the enormous **conflagration**[47] of sunset put out by the swift and stealthy shadows that, rising like a black and **impalpable**[48] **vapor**[49] above the tree-tops, spread over the heaven, extinguishing the crimson glow of floating clouds and the red brilliance of departing daylight. In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth, and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night-sky flung down into the hopeless and **abysmal**[50] night of the wilderness. The white man had some supper out of the basket, then collecting a few sticks that lay about the platform, made up a small fire, not for warmth, but for the sake of the smoke, which would keep off the mosquitos. He wrapped himself in his blankets and sat with his back against the reed wall of the house, smoking thoughtfully.

Arsat came through the doorway with noiseless steps and **squatted**[51] down by the fire. The white man moved his outstretched legs a little.

'She breathes,' said Arsat in a low voice, anticipating the expected question. 'She breathes and burns as if with a great fire. She speaks not; she hears not – and burns!'

He paused for a moment, then asked in a quiet, incurious tone –

'Tuan ... will she die?'

The white man moved his shoulders uneasily, and muttered in a hesitating manner –

'If such is her fate.'

'No, Tuan,' said Arsat calmly. 'If such is my fate. I hear, I see, I wait. I remember ... Tuan, do you remember the old days? Do you

45. Unclearly, imprecisely
46. Daring, risky
47. Fire, blaze
48. Nonexistent, shadowy
49. Mist, fog
50. Dreadful, appalling
51. crouched

remember my brother?'

'Yes,' said the white man. The Malay rose suddenly and went in. The other, sitting still outside, could hear the voice in the hut. Arsat said: 'Hear me! Speak!' His words were succeeded by a complete silence. 'O! Diamelen!' he cried suddenly. After that cry there was a deep sigh. Arsat came out and sank down again in his old place.

They sat in silence before the fire. There was no sound within the house, there was no sound near them; but far away on the lagoon they could hear the voices of the boatmen ringing **fitful**[52] and distinct on the calm water. The fire in the bows of the sampan shone faintly in the distance with a hazy red glow. Then it died out. The voices ceased. The land and the water slept invisible, unstirring and mute. It was as though there had been nothing left in the world but the glitter of stars streaming, ceaseless and vain, through the black stillness of the night.

The white man gazed straight before him into the darkness with wide-open eyes. The fear and fascination, the inspiration and the wonder of death – of death near, unavoidable and unseen, soothed the unrest of his race and stirred the most indistinct, the most intimate of his thoughts. The ever-ready suspicion of evil, the gnawing suspicion that lurks in our hearts, flowed out into the stillness round him – into the stillness profound and dumb, and made it appear untrustworthy and infamous, like the placid[53] and impenetrable mask of an unjustifiable violence. In that fleeting and powerful disturbance of his being the earth enfolded in the starlight peace became a shadowy country of inhuman strife, a battle-field of phantoms terrible and charming, **august**[54] or **ignoble**,[55] struggling ardently for the possession of our helpless hearts. An unquiet and mysterious country of inextinguishable desires and fears.

A **plaintive**[56] murmur rose in the night; a murmur saddening and startling, as if the great solitudes of surrounding woods had tried to whisper into his ear the wisdom of their immense and lofty indifference. Sounds hesitating and vague floated in the air round him, shaped

52. Broken; disturbed
53. Calm, peaceful
54. Noble, worthy of respect
55. Shameful, dishonorable
56. Sad, melancholic, mournful

themselves slowly into words; and at last flowed on gently in a murmuring stream of soft and monotonous sentences. He stirred like a man waking up and changed his position slightly. Arsat, motionless and shadowy, sitting with bowed head under the stars, was speaking in a low and dreamy tone –

"... for where can we lay down the heaviness of our trouble but in a friend's heart? A man must speak of war and of love. You, Tuan, know what war is, and you have seen me in time of danger seek death as other men seek life! A writing may be lost; a lie may be written; but what the eye has seen is truth and remains in the mind!'

'I remember,' said the white man quietly. Arsat went on with mournful composure.

'Therefore I shall speak to you of love. Speak in the night. Speak before both night and love are gone – and the eye of day looks upon my sorrow and my shame; upon my blackened face; upon my burnt-up heart.'

A sigh, short and faint, marked an almost **imperceptible**[57] pause, and then his words flowed on, without a stir, without a gesture.

'After the time of trouble and war was over and you went away from my country in the pursuit of your desires, which we, men of the islands, cannot understand, I and my brother became again, as we had been before, the sword-bearers of the Ruler. You know we were men of family, belonging to a ruling race, and more fit than any to carry on our right shoulder the emblem of power. And in the time of prosperity Si Dendring showed us favor, as we, in time of sorrow, had showed to him the faithfulness of our courage. It was a time of peace. A time of deer-hunts and cock-fights; of idle talks and foolish squabbles between men whose bellies are full and weapons are rusty. But the sower watched the young rice-shoots grow up without fear, and the traders came and went, departed lean and returned fat into the river of peace. They brought news too. Brought lies and truth mixed together, so that no man knew when to rejoice and when to be sorry. We heard from them about you also. They had seen you here and had seen you there. And I was glad to hear, for I remembered the stirring times, and I always remembered you, Tuan, till the time came when my eyes could see nothing in the past, because they had looked upon the one who is

57. Unnoticeable, invisible

dying there – in the house.'

He stopped to exclaim in an intense whisper, 'O Mara bahia! O **Calamity**!'[58] then went on speaking a little louder.

'There's no worse enemy and no better friend than a brother, Tuan, for one brother knows another, and in perfect knowledge is strength for good or evil. I loved my brother. I went to him and told him that I could see nothing but one face, hear nothing but one voice. He told me: "Open your heart so that she can see what is in it – and wait. Patience is wisdom. Inchi Midah may die or our Ruler may throw off his fear of a woman!" ... I waited! ... You remember the lady with the veiled face, Tuan, and the fear of our Ruler before her cunning and temper. And if she wanted her servant, what could I do? But I fed the hunger of my heart on short glances and stealthy words. I **loitered**[59] on the path to the bath-houses in the daytime, and when the sun had fallen behind the forest I crept along the jasmine hedges of the women's courtyard. Unseeing, we spoke to one another through the scent of flowers, through the veil of leaves, through the blades of long grass that stood still before our lips: so great was our prudence, so faint was the murmur of our great longing. The time passed swiftly ... and there were whispers amongst women – and our enemies watched – my brother was gloomy, and I began to think of killing and of a fierce death. ... We are of a people who take what they want – like you whites. There is a time when a man should forget loyalty and respect. Might and authority are given to rulers, but to all men is given love and strength and courage. My brother said, "You shall take her from their midst. We are two who are like one." And I answered, "Let it be soon, for I find no warmth in sunlight that does not shine upon her." Our time came when the Ruler and all the great people went to the mouth of the river to fish by torchlight. There were hundreds of boats, and on the white sand, between the water and the forests, dwellings of leaves were built for the households of the **Rajahs**.[60] The smoke of cooking-fires was like a blue mist of the evening, and many voices rang in it joyfully. While they were making the boats ready to beat up

58. Disaster, tragedy
59. waited
60. Malayan chiefs

the fish, my brother came to me and said, “To-night!” I made ready my weapons, and when the time came our canoe took its place in the circle of boats carrying the torches. The lights blazed on the water, but behind the boats there was darkness. When the shouting began and the excitement made them like mad we dropped out. The water swallowed our fire, and we floated back to the shore that was dark with only here and there the glimmer of **embers**.[61] We could hear the talk of slave-girls amongst the sheds. Then we found a place deserted and silent. We waited there. She came. She came running along the shore, rapid and leaving no trace, like a leaf driven by the wind into the sea. My brother said gloomily, “Go and take her; carry her into our boat.” I lifted her in my arms. She panted. Her heart was beating against my breast. I said, “I take you from those people. You came to the cry of my heart, but my arms take you into my boat against the will of the great!” “It is right,” said my brother. “We are men who take what we want and can hold it against many. We should have taken her in daylight.” I said, “Let us be off;” for since she was in my boat I began to think of our Ruler’s many men. “Yes. Let us be off,” said my brother. “We are cast out and this boat is our country now - and the sea is our refuge.” He lingered with his foot on the shore, and I **entreated**[62] him to hasten, for I remembered the strokes of her heart against my breast and thought that two men cannot withstand a hundred. We left, paddling downstream close to the bank; and as we passed by the creek where they were fishing, the great shouting had ceased, but the murmur of voices was loud like the humming of insects flying at noonday. The boats floated, clustered together, in the red light of torches, under a black roof of smoke; and men talked of their sport. Men that boasted, and praised, and jeered – men that would have been our friends in the morning, but on that night were already our enemies. We paddled swiftly past. We had no more friends in the country of our birth. She sat in the middle of the canoe with covered face; silent as she is now; unseeing as she is now - and I had no regret at what I was leaving because I could hear her breathing close to me – as I can hear her now.’

61. A piece of wood that is not burning but is still red and hot after fire has died
62. Ask, beg, implore

He paused, listened with his ear turned to the doorway, then shook his head and went on.

'My brother wanted to shout the cry of challenge – one cry only – to let the people know we were freeborn robbers that trusted our arms and the great sea. And again I begged him in the name of our love to be silent. Could I not hear her breathing close to me? I knew the pursuit would come quick enough. My brother loved me. He dipped his paddle without a splash. He only said, "There is half a man in you now – the other half is in that woman. I can wait. When you are a whole man again, you will come back with me here to shout defiance. We are sons of the same mother." I made no answer. All my strength and all my spirit were in my hands that held the paddle – for I longed to be with her in a safe place beyond the reach of men's anger and of women's spite. My love was so great, that I thought it could guide me to a country where death was unknown, if I could only escape from Inchi Midah's spite and from our Ruler's sword. We paddled with fury, breathing through our teeth. The blades bit deep into the smooth water. We passed out of the river; we flew in clear channels amongst the shallows. We **skirted**[63] the black coast; we skirted the sand beaches where the sea speaks in whispers to the land; and the gleam of white sand flashed back past our boat, so swiftly she ran upon the water. We spoke not. Only once I said, "Sleep, Diamelen, for soon you may want all your strength." I heard the sweetness of her voice, but I never turned my head. The sun rose and still we went on. Water fell from my face like rain from a cloud. We flew in the light and heat. I never looked back, but I knew that my brother's eyes, behind me, were looking steadily ahead, for the boat went as straight as a bushman's dart, when it leaves the end of the **sumpitan**.[64] There was no better paddler, no better steersman than my brother. Many times, together, we had won races in that canoe. But we never had put out our strength as we did then - then, when for the last time we paddled together! There was no braver or stronger man in our country than my brother. I could not spare the strength to turn my head and look at him, but every moment I heard the hiss of his breath getting louder behind me. Still he did not

63. Go around; avoid
64. Malayan blowgun which discharges poisonous darts

speak. The sun was high. The heat clung to my back like a flame of fire. My ribs were ready to burst, but I could no longer get enough air into my chest. And then I felt I must cry out with my last breath, "Let us rest!" "Good!" he answered; and his voice was firm. He was strong. He was brave. He knew not fear and no fatigue ... My brother!'

A murmur powerful and gentle, a murmur vast and faint; the murmur of trembling leaves, of stirring boughs, ran through the tangled depths of the forests, ran over the starry smoothness of the lagoon, and the water between the piles lapped the **slimy**[65] timber once with a sudden splash. A breath of warm air touched the two men's faces and passed on with a mournful sound – a breath loud and short like an uneasy sigh of the dreaming earth.

Arsat went on in an even, low voice:

'We ran our canoe on the white beach of a little bay close to a long tongue of land that seemed to bar our road; a long wooded **cape**[66] going far into the sea. My brother knew that place. Beyond the cape a river has its entrance. Through the jungle of that land there is a narrow path. We made a fire and cooked rice. Then we slept on the soft sand in the shade of our canoe, while she watched. No sooner had I closed my eyes than I heard her cry of alarm. We leaped up. The sun was halfway down the sky already, and coming in sight in the opening of the bay we saw a **prau**[67] manned by many paddlers. We knew it at once; it was one of our Rajah's praus. They were watching the shore, and saw us. They beat the gong, and turned the head of the prau into the bay. I felt my heart become weak within my breast. Diamelen sat on the sand and covered her face. There was no escape by sea. My brother laughed. He had the gun you had given him, Tuan, before you went away, but there was only a handful of powder. He spoke to me quickly: "Run with her along the path. I shall keep them back, for they have no firearms, and landing in the face of a man with a gun is certain death for some. Run with her. On the other side of that wood there is a fisherman's house – and a canoe. When I have fired all the shots I will follow. I am a great runner, and before they can come up we shall be

65. greasy
66. peninsula
67. Swift Malayan boat

gone. I will hold out as long as I can, for she is but a woman that can neither run nor fight, but she has your heart in her weak hands." He dropped behind the canoe. The prau was coming. She and I ran, and as we rushed along the path I heard shots. My brother fired – once – twice – and the booming of the gong ceased. There was silence behind us. That neck of land is narrow. Before I heard my brother fire the third shot I saw the **shelving**[68] shore, and I saw the water again: the mouth of a broad river. We crossed a grassy glade. We ran down to the water. I saw a low hut above the black mud, and a small canoe hauled up. I heard another shot behind me. I thought, "That is his last charge." We rushed down to the canoe; a man came running from the hut, but I leaped on him, and we rolled together in the mud. Then I got up, and he lay still at my feet. I don't know whether I had killed him or not. I and Diamelen pushed the canoe afloat. I heard yells behind me, and I saw my brother run across the glade. Many men were bounding after him. I took her in my arms and threw her into the boat, then leaped in myself. When I looked back I saw that my brother had fallen. He fell and was up again, but the men were closing round him. He shouted, "I am coming!" The men were close to him. I looked. Many men. Then I looked at her. Tuan, I pushed the canoe! I pushed it into deep water. She was kneeling forward looking at me, and I said, "Take your paddle," while I struck the water with mine. Tuan, I heard him cry. I heard him cry my name twice; and I heard voices shouting, "Kill! Strike!" I never turned back. I heard him calling my name again with a great shriek, as when life is going out together with the voice – and I never turned my head. My own name! ... My brother! Three times he called – but I was not afraid of life. Was she not there in that canoe? And could I not with her find a country where death is forgotten – where death is unknown?

The white man sat up. Arsat rose and stood, an indistinct and silent figure above the dying embers of the fire. Over the lagoon a mist drifting and low had crept, erasing slowly the glittering images of the stars. And now a great expanse of white vapor covered the land: flowed cold and gray in the darkness, eddied in noiseless whirls round the tree-trunks and about the platform of the house, which seemed to

68. deserted

float upon a restless and impalpable illusion of a sea; seemed the only thing surviving the destruction of the world by that **undulating**[69] and voiceless phantom of a flood. Only far away the tops of the trees stood outlined on the twinkle of heaven, like a somber and forbidding shore – a coast deceptive, pitiless and black.

Arsat's voice vibrated loudly in the profound peace.

'I had her there! I had her! To get her I would have faced all mankind. But I had her – and – '

His words went out ringing into the empty distances. He paused, and seemed to listen to them dying away very far – beyond help and beyond recall. Then he said quietly –

'Tuan, I loved my brother.'

A breath of wind made him shiver. High above his head, high above the silent sea of mist the drooping leaves of the palms rattled together with a mournful and expiring sound. The white man stretched his legs. His chin rested on his chest, and he murmured sadly without lifting his head –

'We all love our brothers.'

Arsat burst out with an intense whispering violence –

'What did I care who died? I wanted peace in my own heart.'

He seemed to hear a stir in the house – listened – then stepped in noiselessly. The white man stood up. A breeze was coming in fitful puffs. The stars shone paler as if they had retreated into the frozen depths of immense space. After a chill gust of wind there were a few seconds of perfect calm and absolute silence. Then from behind the black and wavy line of the forests a column of golden light shot up into the heavens and spread over the semicircle of the eastern horizon. The sun had risen. The mist lifted, broke into drifting patches, vanished into thin flying wreaths; and the unveiled lagoon lay, polished and black, in the heavy shadows at the foot of the wall of trees. A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared dazzlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the earth for ever. The white man, standing gazing upwards before the doorway, heard in the hut a confused and

69. Surging, rising and falling

broken murmur of distracted words ending with a loud groan. Suddenly Arsat stumbled out with outstretched hands, shivered, and stood still for some time with fixed eyes. Then he said –

'She burns no more.'

Before his face the sun showed its edge above the tree-tops, rising steadily. The breeze freshened; a great brilliance burst upon the lagoon, sparkled on the **rippling**[70] water. The forests came out of the clear shadows of the morning, became distinct, as if they had rushed nearer - to stop short in a great stir of leaves, of nodding boughs, of swaying branches. In the **merciless**[71] sunshine the whisper of unconscious life grew louder, speaking in an incomprehensible voice round the dumb darkness of that human sorrow. Arsat's eyes wandered slowly, then stared at the rising sun.

'I can see nothing,' he said half aloud to himself.

'There is nothing,' said the white man, moving to the edge of the platform and waving his hand to his boat. A shout came faintly over the lagoon and the sampan began to glide towards the abode of the friend of ghosts.

'If you want to come with me, I will wait all the morning,' said the white man, looking away upon the water.

'No, Tuan,' said Arsat softly. 'I shall not eat or sleep in this house, but I must first see my road. Now I can see nothing – see nothing! There is no light and no peace in the world; but there is death – death for many. We were sons of the same mother – and I left him in the midst of enemies; but I am going back now.'

He drew a long breath and went on in a dreamy tone.

'In a little while I shall see clear enough to strike – to strike. But she has died, and ... now ... darkness.'

He flung his arms wide open, let them fall along his body, and then stood still with unmoved face and stony eyes, staring at the sun. The white man got down into his canoe. The polers ran smartly along the sides of the boat, looking over their shoulders at the beginning of a weary journey. High in the stern, his head muffled up in white rags, the juragan sat moody, letting his paddle trail in the water. The white

70. Waving, wrinkling
71. Cruel, pitiless

man, leaning with both arms over the grass roof of the little cabin, looked back at the shining ripple of the boat's wake. Before the sampan passed out of the lagoon into the creek he lifted his eyes. Arsat had not moved. He stood lonely in the searching sunshine; and he looked beyond. The great light of a cloudless day into the darkness of a world of illusions.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Philology

Text Analysis and Interpretation

Philology, derived from the Greek φιλολογία (*philologia*[1], from the terms φίλος *philos* meaning "loved, beloved, dear, friend" and λόγος *logos* "word, articulation, reason") considers both form and meaning in linguistic expression, combining linguistics and literary studies. Thus, *Philology* literally means "love of words," and the field often deals with literature more than other branches of linguistics do.

Philological Analysis "unites" linguistic and literary approaches to literary works.

Text Analysis and Interpretation may serve as a preliminary step towards philological analysis. It includes a complex study of the phenomenon of text where everything is relevant: cultural and historical context; genre; narrative analysis; composition; theme; message; tone; analysis of the structure of a text; language means employed by the author; stylistic devices and expressive means relevant in the text. The kind of complex analysis encompasses linguistic, literary and cultural studies and gives rise to a variety of approaches to analyzing literary texts. When dealing with Text Analysis and Interpretation, we shall look at an artistic text as a cultural and historical phenomenon and view the connection between language and literature and study the principles of the production and reception of a literary text.

LITERATURE and TEXT

Etymologically, the Latin word "litteratura" is derived from "littera" (letter). The definitions of literature usually include additional adjectives such as "aesthetic" or "artistic" to distinguish literary works from non-literary texts, such as scholarly writings, legal documents, newspapers, etc.

The word **text** is related to "textile" and can be translated as "fabric": just as single threads form a fabric, so words and sentences form a meaningful and coherent text.

Discourse Narrative Discourse

Discourse is a broad term, referring to a variety of written and oral manifestations of language which is used in many theoretical discussions in literary studies and social sciences, but which is unfortunately often not explicitly defined. The boundaries of this term are not fixed and vary depending on the context in which it appears.

Narrative (narratorial) discourse (like any other discourse) is the **oral or written text produced by an act of discourse.** Literary narrative communication has always been a part of a general communication system. R. Jakobson argued that literature does not exist as a separate entity. According to him, all texts, whether spoken or written, are the same, except that some authors encode their texts with distinctive literary qualities that distinguish them from other forms of discourse [Jakobson, 1921].[72]

Interpretation and Analysis

Joseph Conrad and Impressionistic Literature

Does Conrad mainly focus on character's mental life, such as the character's impressions, feelings, sensations and emotions?

Does he make any comments about the character's inner state? Does he interpret the character's emotions?

72. Jakobson, Roman, "On Realism in Art", The MIT Press, 1921.

Setting Culture History

Malay is an official language of Brunei and Malaysia, and one of the official languages in Singapore.

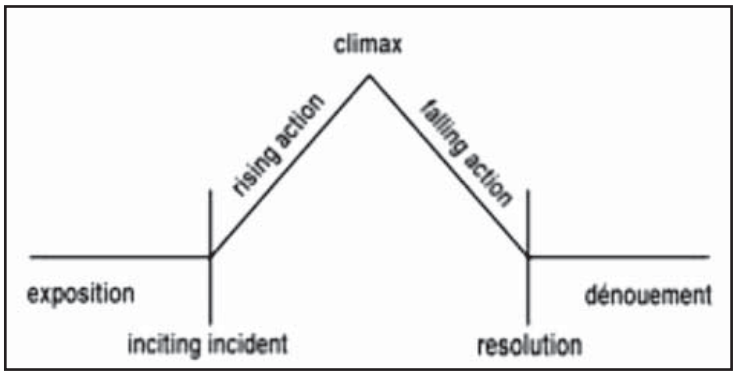
Joseph Conrad could speak and understand Malay language. He knew many facts about local people's customs. He employed his knowledge in his Far East tales. "The Lagoon" is one of them.

"The Lagoon" is set in Southeast Asia (on the Malay Peninsula or in the Malay Archipelago) on a river flowing eastward to the ocean, on a creek flowing inland through dense forest, and at a small house on a lagoon. The action takes place in the last half of the nineteenth century after Europeans colonized southern Asia and after the Malay kingdoms of Wajo, Soping, Boni, and Si Dendring fought wars over who should succeed as rajah of Si Dendring.

Story and Plot

Story is the chronological sequence of events. (Forster's example: "The king died, and then the queen died").[73]

Plot is the logical and causal structure of a story. ("The king died, and then the queen died of grief" is a plot).



The diagram above is called Freytag's Pyramid

73. This example comes from E.M. Forster's "Aspects of the Novel".

Gustav Freytag was a Nineteenth Century German novelist who saw common patterns in the plots of stories and novels and developed a diagram to analyze them.

Narrative's discourse does not have to present the story in chronological order. A narrative may begin with action and then execute a flashback.

Flashback

Flashback (also called **Analepsis**, plural *Analepses*) is frequently used device in films for foreshadowing and stronger dramatic effect. In literature this device usually takes the narrative back in time from the current point the story has reached. When an earlier episode or event is inserted into the sequence of events (i.e. in the story) we deal with flashback. Flashbacks are often used to recount events that happened prior to the story's primary sequence of events. In fact, a reader can jump forward and backward.

Do you remember any literary works or movies where this literary device is employed?

Speak about the episode with a flashback in "The Lagoon"?

Narrative Modes

A Story within a story

In "The Lagoon," Joseph Conrad uses a literary device called a story within a story. Story within a story is a technique used to tell a story during the action of another one. In cinema and TV series, this technique is known as show-within-a-show. Conrad executes this device through the main character, Arsat. Arsat's narration gives us his own view of the events that lead to his isolated life. The literary device of stories within a story dates back to a device known as a frame story, when the outer story does not have much matter, and more relevant story is told by one or more characters at intratextual level.

Omniscient third-person point of view

Third-person omniscient tells the readers in the third person and at the same time gives them access to the character's thoughts and feelings.

Joseph Conrad tells the story in omniscient third-person point of view, enabling the narrator to reveal the thoughts of the characters.

Theme

In Conrad's time, literary critics usually were commenting favorably on his works and often remarked that in almost all his works, Conrad explored profound themes such as loneliness; despair; self-loathing; moral ambiguities of human existence; remorse; impossibility of communication; desolation and emptiness.

Are the above timeless themes reflected in "The Lagoon"?

Title as a Symbol

The story is called "The Lagoon."

Title is always a meaningful element of text. Its semantic radius comprises the whole text and is a helpful part of concept formation. The Lagoon implicitly expresses the idea/ concept of the story.

What can the lagoon symbolize in the story?

Symbolism in the Story

Description

Description usually creates images in the reader's mind and enhances the story.

In what way does the description reflect the character's emotional inner state?

Pay attention how Conrad describes Malay forests: *"The forests, somber and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream."*

Why does he employ the following adjectives – "somber," "dull"; or the following nouns: "gloom" "blackness" "darkness"? These words create certain images and emotional state for the reader. Do they create any symbolism as well in the story? Do they symbolize Arsat's inner state? Why is Arsat's heart dark? What is his inner conflict?

Pay attention to the passages where Conrad describes the sunset:

" The white man came out of the hut in time to see the enormous conflagration of sunset put out by the swift and stealthy shadows that, rising like a black and impalpable vapor above the tree-tops, spread over the heaven, extinguishing the crimson glow of floating clouds and the red brilliance of departing daylight. In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth, and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night-sky flung down into the hopeless and abysmal night of the wilderness."

Write out the emotive vocabulary that creates images and emotional state for the reader and sets a certain kind of tone.

Pay attention to the passages where Conrad describes the surise:

"The white man came out of the hut in time to see the enormous conflagration of sunset put out by the swift and stealthy shadows that, rising like a black and impalpable vapor above the tree-tops, spread over the heaven, extinguishing the crimson glow of floating clouds and the red brilliance of departing daylight. In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth, and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night-sky flung down into the hopeless and abysmal night of the wilderness."

"…the sun appeared unclouded and dazzling, poised low over the water that shone smoothly like a band of metal."

"…The sun had risen. The mist lifted, broke into drifting patches,

vanished into thin flying wreaths; and the unveiled lagoon lay, polished and black, in the heavy shadows at the foot of the wall of trees. A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared dazzlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the earth for ever. The sun had risen. The mist lifted, broke into drifting patches, vanished into thin flying wreaths; and the unveiled lagoon lay, polished and black, in the heavy shadows at the foot of the wall of trees. A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared dazzlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the earth for ever."

Determine Conrad's style from the passage presented above. Identify particular word choices, figurative language, and different language devices. What influence do they exert on readers' emotions?

What do the sunset and sunrise symbolize?

When Diamelen dies, morning light begins to drive out the darkness of the forest. Does it signify a change in Arsat?

Pay attention how the author describes the lagoon.

"Here and there, near the glistening blackness of the water, a twisted root of some tall tree showed amongst the tracery of small ferns, black and dull, writhing and motionless, like an arrested snake. The short words of the paddlers reverberated loudly between the thick and somber walls of vegetation. Darkness oozed out from between the trees, through the tangled maze of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstirring leaves; the darkness, mysterious and invincible; the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests.

The men poled in the shoaling water. The creek broadened, opening out into a wide sweep of a stagnant lagoon."

Do you think that in describing the lagoon as, motionless (like an arrested snake), black, dull; dead; mysterious; stagnant), the narrator is also describing the life of Arsat and Diamelen?

Several passages contrast darkness with light, such as:

"In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth, and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night-sky flung down into the hopeless and abysmal night of the wilderness."

Does this contrast symbolize anything? **Can it symbolize Arsat's spiritual change?**

"A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared dazzlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the earth for ever."

What does the eagle symbolize in the story?

Does the boat symbolize anything?

Critics also speak about symbols and contrasts of still and movement; water and fire in the story. Find passages and discuss their symbolic meaning.

Style

Conrad is generally famous for his exotic style. How does this show in the story "The Lagoon"?

Conrad is generally fond of using a lot of adjectives, especially, when he introduces description. In his descriptive passages he introduces adjectives in clusters.

Try to find such passages in the text and explain the intention of the writer to employ a "bunch of adjectives."

Synonyms

In the exposition of the story, where Conrad refers to description, he introduces a lot of synonyms.

Adjectives: motionless, unstirring, stagnant, silent, mute.

Nouns: stillness, immobility

Verbs: look, gaze, glance

Synonyms generally reveal different aspects, shades and variations of the same phenomenon.

In linguistics synonyms are defined as words of the same category of parts of speech conveying the same meaning but different either in shades of meaning or in stylistic characteristics.

Keeping in mind that English was not Conrad's mother tongue, can you notice how he manages to choose the most suitable word in every context? Can you discern the various connotations in the meanings of synonyms?

Denotation and Connotation

Synonyms are also defined as words with the same denotation (the same denotative component), but differing in connotations (connotative components).

Denotative component expresses the conceptual content of a word. The leading semantic component in the semantic structure of a word is termed **denotative component.**

Additional semantic components are termed **connotations** or **connotative components**.

Find as many synonyms in the story as possible and define their linguistic essence. Single out the denotative and connotative components of meanings of the synonyms.

Identify Stylistic Devices

There's no worse enemy and no better friend than a brother. . .

The statement seems rather self-contradictory, even absurd at first. But in fact it might turn out to be true.

Can you identify which stylistic device it is and what function it has in the text?

"Water that shone smoothly like a band of metal …"

"Enormous conflagration of sunset … rising like a black and impalpable vapor above the tree-tops."

One of the simplest and also the most effective devices both in poetry and prose is the use of **comparison**. The examples above allow the two ideas or objects to remain distinct in spite of their similarities.

In what way do the above comparisons serve the intensification of the concept? What is this stylistic device called and in what way is it different from ordinary comparison?

"In that fleeting and powerful disturbance of his being the earth enfolded in the starlight peace became a shadowy country of inhuman strife, a battle-field of phantoms terrible and charming, august or ignoble, struggling ardently for the possession of our helpless hearts."

Why is the earth compared to a battle-field of phantoms? This language device compares seemingly unrelated objects and equates two ideas despite their differences.

Which stylistic device is it and in what way does it differ from the previous ones, which also compare two ideas or objects?

In the stillness of the air ***every*** *tree,* ***every*** *leaf,* ***every*** *bough,* ***every*** *tendril of creeper and* ***every*** *petal of minute blossoms seemed to have been bewitched into an immobility perfect and final.*

A rumor *powerful and gentle,* ***a rumor*** *vast and faint; the* ***rumor*** *of trembling leaves, of stirring boughs, ran through the tangled depths of the forests. . . .*

What language device is called the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of every clause?

Are there more examples of this kind in the text?

"S*omber and dull,* ***s****tood motionle****ss*** *and* ***s****ilent on each* ***s****ide of the broad* ***s****tream."*

"Sunset put out by the ***s****wift and* ***s****tealthy shadows"*

"But her ***b****ig eyes, wide open,* ***g****littered in the* ***g****loom"*

Does the writer create melodic effect by using this stylistic device? He repeats similar consonant sounds in a very close succession. Can you identify which stylistic device it is?

Understanding Plot Development

Exposition

How does the story begin? Why does the author refer to description?

Climax

When does the climax occur in the story? What actually happens when Diamelen dies? Is her death connected with Arsat's repentance?

Identify yourself with the character and draw conclusions

Have you ever gone through a terrible ordeal that entirely changed your inner self, your world outlook, your belief? ...

Epiphany

In literature **epiphany** means a sudden revelation, recognition, of an important and underlying truth by a character. It can result in rebirth and renewal of a character. The term (taken from the Greek *epiphaneia,* the manifestation by the gods of their divinities to mortal eyes) was first applied to literature by James Joyce, who called his early experimentations with short prose passages "epiphanies."

Where and when does the epiphany occur in the story?

Interpret and Analyze

Find passages in the story showing Arsat's inner conflict. Write out emotive vocabulary from the text and decide in what way the emotive words are connected with the character's inner conflict.

'No, Tuan,' said Arsat softly. 'I shall not eat or sleep in this house, but I must first see my road. Now I can see nothing – see nothing! There is no light and no peace in the world; but there is death – death for many. We were sons of the same mother – and I left him in the midst of enemies; but I am going back now.'

Where, do you think, Arsat is going? What kind of world outlook is professed by the character?

Sherwood Anderson is one of the most influential American writers, famous for his short story collections, especially *Winesburg, Ohio*. His literary technique was experimental, avant garde for the time. *Ohio* inspired the following generation of post-World War I writers, such as, William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, etc. Anderson's short fiction in Winesburg, Ohio portrays American small-town life. He, like Ernest Hemingway, who owed much to Sherwood Anderson, is deceptive in his simplicity, since his fiction has depth beneath its surface.

Mother
Sherwood Anderson

E LIZABETH WILLARD, the mother of George Willard, was tall and **gaunt**[74] and her face was marked with **smallpox**[75] scars. Although she was but forty-five, some **obscure**[76] disease had taken the fire out of her figure. **Listlessly**[77] she went about the disorderly old hotel looking at the faded wall-paper and the ragged carpets and, when she was able to be about, doing the work of a chambermaid among beds soiled by the **slumbers**[78] of fat traveling men. Her husband, Tom Willard, a slender, graceful man with square shoulders, a quick military step, and a black mustache trained to turn sharply up at the ends, tried to put the wife out of his mind. The presence of the tall ghostly figure, moving slowly through the halls, he took as a reproach to himself. When he thought of her he grew angry and swore. The hotel was unprofitable and forever on the edge of failure and he wished himself out of it. He thought of the old house and the woman who lived there with him as things defeated and done for. The hotel in which he had begun life so hopefully was now a mere ghost of what a hotel should be. As he went **spruce**[79] and business-like through the streets of Winesburg, he

74. Thin, skinny, bony
75. A serious infectious disease (now rare) that causes fever and leaves permanent marks on the skin
76. Unclear, incomprehensible, difficult to understand
77. Without energy
78. Sleep, a time when somebody is asleep
79. Neat, smart, elegant

sometimes stopped and turned quickly about as though fearing that the spirit of the hotel and of the woman would follow him even into the streets. “Damn such a life, damn it!” he **sputtered**[80] aimlessly.

Tom Willard had a passion for village politics and for years had been the leading Democrat in a strongly Republican community. Some day, he told himself, the tide of things political will turn in my favor and the years of ineffectual service count big in the bestowal of rewards. He dreamed of going to Congress and even of becoming governor. Once when a younger member of the party arose at a political conference and began to boast of his faithful service, Tom Willard grew white with fury. “Shut up, you,” he roared, glaring about. “What do you know of service? What are you but a boy? Look at what I`ve done here! I was a Democrat here in Winesburg when it was a crime to be a Democrat. In the old days they fairly hunted us with guns.”

Between Elizabeth and her one son George there was a deep unexpressed bond of sympathy, based on a girlhood dream that had long ago died. In the son’s presence she was timid and reserved, but sometimes while he hurried about town intent upon his duties as a reporter, she went into his room and closing the door knelt by a little desk, made of a kitchen table, that sat near a window. In the room by the desk she went through a ceremony that was half a prayer, half a demand, addressed to the skies. In the boyish figure she yearned to see something half forgotten that had once been a part of herself recreated. The prayer concerned that. “Even though I die, I will in some way keep defeat from you,” she cried, and so deep was her determination that her whole body shook. Her eyes glowed and she clenched her fists. “If I am dead and see him becoming a meaningless drab figure like myself, I will come back,” she declared. “I ask God now to give me that privilege. I demand it. I will pay for it. God may beat me with his fists. I will take any blow that may **befall**[81] if but this my boy be allowed to express something for us both.” Pausing uncertainly, the woman stared about the boy`s room. “And do not let him become smart and successful either,” she added vaguely.

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80. Gasp, stammer
81. Happen, occur

The communion between George Willard and his mother was outwardly a formal thing without meaning. When she was ill and sat by the window in her room he sometimes went in the evening to make her a visit. They sat by a window that looked over the roof of a small frame building into Main Street. By turning their heads they could see through another window, along an alleyway that ran behind the Main Street stores and into the back door of Abner Groff`s bakery. Sometimes as they sat thus a picture of village life presented itself to them. At the back door of his shop appeared Abner Groff with a stick or an empty milk bottle in his hand. For a long time there was a **feud**[82] between the baker and a grey cat that belonged to Sylvester West, the druggist. The boy and his mother saw the cat creep into the door of the bakery and presently emerge followed by the baker, who swore and waved his arms about. The baker`s eyes were small and red and his black hair and beard were filled with flour dust. Sometimes he was so angry that, although the cat had disappeared, he hurled sticks, bits of broken glass, and even some of the tools of his trade about. Once he broke a window at the back of Sinning`s Hardware Store. In the alley the grey cat crouched behind barrels filled with torn paper and broken bottles above which flew a black swarm of flies. Once when she was alone, and after watching a prolonged and ineffectual outburst on the part of the baker, Elizabeth Willard put her head down on her long white hands and wept. After that she did not look along the alleyway any more, but tried to forget the **contest**[83] between the bearded man and the cat. It seemed like a rehearsal of her own life, terrible in its vividness.

In the evening when the son sat in the room with his mother, the silence made them both feel awkward. Darkness came on and the evening train came in at the station. In the street below feet tramped up and down upon a board sidewalk. In the station yard, after the evening train had gone, there was a heavy silence. Perhaps Skinner Leason, the express agent, moved a truck the length of the station platform. Over on Main Street sounded a man`s voice, laughing. The door of the express office banged. George Willard arose and crossing the room

82. Row, quarrel
83. Challenge, competition, dispute

fumbled for the doorknob. Sometimes he knocked against a chair, making it scrape along the floor. By the window sat the sick woman, perfectly still, listless. Her long hands, white and bloodless, could be seen drooping over the ends of the arms of the chair. “I think you had better be out among the boys. You are too much indoors,” she said, striving to relieve the embarrassment of the departure. “I thought I would take a walk,” replied George Willard, who felt awkward and confused.

One evening in July, when the transient guests who made the New Willard House their temporary home had become scarce, and the hallways, lighted only by kerosene lamps turned low, were plunged in gloom, Elizabeth Willard had an adventure. She had been ill in bed for several days and her son had not come to visit her. She was alarmed. The feeble blaze of life that remained in her body was blown into a flame by her anxiety and she crept out of bed, dressed and hurried along the hallway toward her son`s room, shaking with exaggerated fears. As she went along she steadied herself with her hand, slipped along the papered walls of the hall and breathed with difficulty. The air whistled through her teeth. As she hurried forward she thought how foolish she was. “He is concerned with boyish affairs,” she told herself. “Perhaps he has now begun to walk about in the evening with girls.”

Elizabeth Willard had a dread of being seen by guests in the hotel that had once belonged to her father and the ownership of which still stood recorded in her name in the county courthouse. The hotel was continually losing patronage because of its shabbiness and she thought of herself as also shabby. Her own room was in an obscure corner and when she felt able to work she voluntarily worked among the beds, preferring the labor that could be done when the guests were abroad seeking trade among the merchants of Winesburg.

By the door of her son`s room the mother knelt upon the floor and listened for some sound from within. When she heard the boy moving about and talking in low tones a smile came to her lips. George Willard had a habit of talking aloud to himself and to hear him doing so had always given his mother a peculiar pleasure. The habit in him, she felt, strengthened the secret bond that existed between them. A thousand

times she had whispered to herself of the matter. “He is groping about, trying to find himself,” she thought. “He is not a dull clod, all words and smartness. Within him there is a secret something that is striving to grow. It is the thing I let be killed in myself.”

In the darkness in the hallway by the door the sick woman arose and started again toward her own room. She was afraid that the door would open and the boy come upon her. When she had reached a safe distance and was about to turn a corner into a second hallway she stopped and bracing herself with her hands waited, thinking to shake off a trembling fit of weakness that had come upon her. The presence of the boy in the room had made her happy. In her bed, during the long hours alone, the little fears that had visited her had become giants. Now they were all gone. “When I get back to my room I shall sleep,” she murmured gratefully.

But Elizabeth Willard was not to return to her bed and to sleep. As she stood trembling in the darkness the door of her son`s room opened and the boy`s father, Tom Willard, stepped out. In the light that steamed out at the door he stood with the knob in his hand and talked. What he said infuriated the woman.

Tom Willard was ambitious for his son. He had always thought of himself as a successful man, although nothing he had ever done had turned out successfully. However, when he was out of sight of the New Willard House and had no fear of coming upon his wife, he swaggered and began to dramatize himself as one of the chief men of the town. He wanted his son to succeed. He it was who had secured for the boy the position on the Winesburg Eagle. Now, with a ring of earnestness in his voice, he was advising concerning some course of conduct. “I tell you what, George, you`ve got to wake up,” he said sharply. “Will Henderson has spoken to me three times concerning the matter. He says you go along for hours not hearing when you are spoken to and acting like a **gawky**[84] girl. What **ails**[85] you?” Tom Willard laughed good-naturedly. “Well, I guess you`ll get over it,” he said. “I told Will that. You`re not a fool and you`re not a woman. You`re Tom Willard`s son and you`ll wake up. I`m not afraid. What you say clears

84. Awkward, clumsy
85. Ail means to be ill, to suffer

things up. If being a newspaper man had put the notion of becoming a writer into your mind that`s all right. Only I guess you`ll have to wake up to do that too, eh?"

Tom Willard went briskly along the hallway and down a flight of stairs to the office. The woman in the darkness could hear him laughing and talking with a guest who was striving to wear away a dull evening by dozing in a chair by the office door. She returned to the door of her son`s room. The weakness had passed from her body as by a miracle and she stepped boldly along. A thousand ideas raced through her head. When she heard the scraping of a chair and the sound of a pen scratching upon paper, she again turned and went back along the hallway to her own room.

A definite determination had come into the mind of the defeated wife of the Winesburg hotel keeper. The determination was the result of long years of quiet and rather ineffectual thinking. "Now," she told herself, "I will act. There is something threatening my boy and I will **ward it off**."[86] The fact that the conversation between Tom Willard and his son had been rather quiet and natural, as though an understanding existed between them, maddened her. Although for years she had hated her husband, her hatred had always before been a quite impersonal thing. He had been merely a part of something else that she hated. Now, and by the few words at the door, he had become the thing personified. In the darkness of her own room she clenched her fists and glared about. Going to a cloth bag that hung on a nail by the wall she took out a long pair of sewing scissors and held them in her hand like a dagger. "I will stab him," she said aloud. "He has chosen to be the voice of evil and I will kill him. When I have killed him something will snap within myself and I will die also. It will be a release for all of us."

In her girlhood and before her marriage with Tom Willard, Elizabeth had borne a somewhat shaky reputation in Winesburg. For years she had been what is called "stage-struck" and had paraded through the streets with traveling men guests at her father`s hotel, wearing loud clothes and urging them to tell her of life in the cities out of which they had come. Once she startled the town by putting on men`s clothes and riding a bicycle down Main Street.

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86. Defend against, protect against

In her own mind the tall dark girl had been in those days much confused. A great restlessness was in her and it expressed itself in two ways. First there was an uneasy desire for change, for some big definite movement to her life. It was this feeling that had turned her mind to the stage. She dreamed of joining some company and wandering over the world, seeing always new faces and giving something out of herself to all people. Sometimes at night she was quite beside herself with the thought, but when she tried to talk of the matter to the members of the theatrical companies that came to Winesburg and stopped at her father`s hotel, she got nowhere. They did not seem to know what she meant, or if she did get something of her passion expressed, they only laughed. “It`s not like that,” they said. “It`s as dull and uninteresting as this here. Nothing comes of it.”

With the traveling men when she walked about with them, and later with Tom Willard, it was quite different. Always they seemed to understand and sympathize with her. On the side streets of the village, in the darkness under the trees, they took hold of her hand and she thought that something unexpressed in herself came forth and became a part of an unexpressed something in them.

And then there was the second expression of her restlessness. When that came she felt for a time released and happy. She did not blame the men who walked with her and later she did not blame Tom Willard. It was always the same, beginning with kisses and ending, after strange wild emotions, with peace and then sobbing repentance. When she sobbed she put her hand upon the face of the man and had always the same thought. Even though he were large and bearded she thought he had become suddenly a little boy. She wondered why he did not sob also.

In her room, tucked away in a corner of the old Willard House, Elizabeth Willard lighted a lamp and put it on a dressing table that stood by the door. A thought had come into her mind and she went to a closet and brought out a small square box and set it on the table. The box contained material for makeup and had been left with other things by a theatrical company that had once been stranded in Winesburg. Elizabeth Willard had decided that she would be beautiful. Her

hair was still black and there was a great mass of it braided and coiled about her head. The scene that was to take place in the office below began to grow in her mind. No ghostly worn-out figure should confront Tom Willard, but something quite unexpected and startling. Tall and with dusky cheeks and hair that fell in a mass from her shoulders, a figure should come striding down the stairway before the startled loungers in the hotel office. The figure would be silent – it would be swift and terrible. As a tigress whose cub had been threatened would she appear, coming out of the shadows, stealing noiselessly along and holding the long wicked scissors in her hand.

With a little broken sob in her throat, Elizabeth Willard blew out the light that stood upon the table and stood weak and trembling in the darkness. The strength that had been as a miracle in her body left and she half **reeled**[87] across the floor, clutching at the back of the chair in which she had spent so many long days staring out over the tin roofs into the main street of Winesburg. In the hallway there was the sound of footsteps and George Willard came in at the door. Sitting in a chair beside his mother he began to talk. "I`m going to get out of here," he said. "I don`t know where I shall go or what I shall do but I am going away."

The woman in the chair waited and trembled. An impulse came to her. "I suppose you had better wake up," she said. "You think that? You will go to the city and make money, eh? It will be better for you, you think, to be a business man, to be brisk and smart and alive?" She waited and trembled.

The son shook his head. "I suppose I can`t make you understand, but oh, I wish I could," he said earnestly. "I can`t even talk to father about it. I don`t try. There isn`t any use. I don`t know what I shall do. I just want to go away and look at people and think."

Silence fell upon the room where the boy and woman sat together. Again, as on the other evenings, they were embarrassed. After a time the boy tried again to talk. "I suppose it won`t be for a year or two but I`ve been thinking about it," he said, rising and going toward the door. "Something father said makes it sure that I shall have to go away." He fumbled with the doorknob. In the room the silence became unbearable to the woman. She wanted to cry out with joy because of the

87. Roll, lurch

words that had come from the lips of her son, but the expression of joy had become impossible to her. “I think you had better go out among the boys. You are too much indoors,” she said. “I thought I would go for a little walk,” replied the son stepping awkwardly out of the room and closing the door.

Adventure

ALICE HINDMAN, a woman of twenty-seven when George Willard was a mere boy, had lived in Winesburg all her life. She clerked in Winney’s Dry Goods Store and lived with her mother, who had married a second husband.

Alice’s step-father was a carriage painter, and given to drink. His story is an odd one. It will be worth telling some day.

At twenty-seven Alice was tall and somewhat slight. Her head was large and overshadowed her body. Her shoulders were a little stooped and her hair and eyes brown. She was very quiet but beneath a placid exterior a continual **ferment**[88] went on.

When she was a girl of sixteen and before she began to work in the store, Alice had an affair with a young man. The young man, named Ned Currie, was older than Alice. He, like George Willard, was employed on the *Winesburg Eagle* and for a long time he went to see Alice almost every evening. Together the two walked under the trees through the streets of the town and talked of what they would do with their lives. Alice was then a very pretty girl and Ned Currie took her into his arms and kissed her. He became excited and said things he did not intend to say and Alice, betrayed by her desire to have something beautiful come into her rather narrow life, also grew excited. She also talked. The outer **crust**[89] of her life, all of her natural **diffidence**[90] and reserve, was torn away and she gave herself over to the emotions of love. When, late in the fall of her sixteenth year, Ned Currie went away to Cleveland where he hoped to get a place on a city newspaper and rise in the world, she wanted to go with him. With a trembling voice she told him what was in her mind. “I will work and you can work,”

88. Excitement, agitation, turmoil
89. Outer layer, shell
90. Shyness, timidity

she said. “I do not want to harness you to a needless expense that will prevent your making progress. Don’t marry me now. We will get along without that and we can be together. Even though we live in the same house no one will say anything. In the city we will be unknown and people will pay no attention to us.”

Ned Currie was puzzled by the determination and abandon of his sweetheart and was also deeply touched. He had wanted the girl to become his mistress but changed his mind. He wanted to protect and care for her. “You don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said sharply; “you may be sure I’ll let you do no such thing. As soon as I get a good job I’ll come back. For the present you’ll have to stay here. It’s the only thing we can do.”

On the evening before he left Winesburg to take up his new life in the city, Ned Currie went to call on Alice. They walked about through the streets for an hour and then got a rig from Wesley Moyer’s livery and went for a drive in the country. The moon came up and they found themselves unable to talk. In his sadness the young man forgot the resolutions he had made regarding his conduct with the girl.

They got out of the buggy at a place where a long meadow ran down to the bank of Wine Creek and there in the dim light became lovers. When at midnight they returned to town they were both glad. It did not seem to them that anything that could happen in the future could blot out the wonder and beauty of the thing that had happened. “Now we will have to stick to each other, whatever happens we will have to do that,” Ned Currie said as he left the girl at her father’s door.

The young newspaper man did not succeed in getting a place on a Cleveland paper and went west to Chicago. For a time he was lonely and wrote to Alice almost every day. Then he was caught up by the life of the city; he began to make friends and found new interests in life. In Chicago he boarded at a house where there were several women. One of them attracted his attention and he forgot Alice in Winesburg. At the end of a year he had stopped writing letters, and only once in a long time, when he was lonely or when he went into one of the city parks and saw the moon shining on the grass as it had shone that night on the meadow by Wine Creek, did he think of her at all.

In Winesburg the girl who had been loved grew to be a woman. When she was twenty-two years old her father, who owned a harness repair shop, died suddenly. The harness maker was an old soldier, and after a few months his wife received a widow's pension. She used the first money she got to buy a loom and became a weaver of carpets, and Alice got a place in Winney's store. For a number of years nothing could have induced her to believe that Ned Currie would not in the end return to her.

She was glad to be employed because the daily round of toil in the store made the time of waiting seem less long and uninteresting. She began to save money, thinking that when she had saved two or three hundred dollars she would follow her lover to the city and try if her presence would not win back his affections.

Alice did not blame Ned Currie for what had happened in the moonlight in the field, but felt that she could never marry another man. To her the thought of giving to another what she still felt could belong only to Ned seemed monstrous. When other young men tried to attract her attention she would have nothing to do with them. "I am his wife and shall remain his wife whether he comes back or not," she whispered to herself, and for all of her willingness to support herself could not have understood the growing modern idea of a woman's owning herself and giving and taking for her own ends in life.

Alice worked in the dry goods store from eight in the morning until six at night and on three evenings a week went back to the store to stay from seven until nine. As time passed and she became more and more lonely she began to practice the devices common to lonely people. When at night she went upstairs into her own room she knelt on the floor to pray and in her prayers whispered things she wanted to say to her lover. She became attached to inanimate objects, and because it was her own, could not bare to have anyone touch the furniture of her room. The trick of saving money, begun for a purpose, was carried on after the scheme of going to the city to find Ned Currie had been given up. It became a fixed habit, and when she needed new clothes she did not get them. Sometimes on rainy afternoons in the store she got out her bank book and, letting it lie open before her, spent hours dreaming

impossible dreams of saving money enough so that the interest would support both herself and her future husband.

"Ned always liked to travel about," she thought. "I'll give him the chance. Some day when we are married and I can save both his money and my own, we will be rich. Then we can travel together all over the world."

In the dry goods store weeks ran into months and months into years as Alice waited and dreamed of her lover's return. Her employer, a grey old man with false teeth and a thin grey mustache that drooped down over his mouth, was not given to conversation, and sometimes, on rainy days and in the winter when a storm raged in Main Street, long hours passed when no customers came in. Alice arranged and rearranged the stock. She stood near the front window where she could look down the deserted street and thought of the evenings when she had walked with Ned Currie and of what he had said. "We will have to stick to each other now." The words echoed and re-echoed through the mind of the maturing woman. Tears came into her eyes. Sometimes when her employer had gone out and she was alone in the store she put her head on the counter and wept. "Oh, Ned, I am waiting," she whispered over and over, and all the time the creeping fear that he would never come back grew stronger within her.

In the spring when the rains have passed and before the long hot days of summer have come, the country about Winesburg is delightful. The town lies in the midst of open fields, but beyond the fields are pleasant patches of woodlands. In the wooded places are many little cloistered nooks, quiet places where lovers go to sit on Sunday afternoons. Through the trees they look out across the fields and see farmers at work about the barns or people driving up and down on the roads. In the town bells ring and occasionally a train passes, looking like a toy thing in the distance.

For several years after Ned Currie went away Alice did not go into the wood with the other young people on Sunday, but one day after he had been gone for two or three years and when her loneliness seemed unbearable, she put on her best dress and set out. Finding a little sheltered place from which she could see the town and a long stretch of the fields, she sat down. Fear of age and ineffectuality took

possession of her. She could not sit still, and arose. As she stood looking out over the land something, perhaps the thought of never ceasing life as it expresses itself in the flow of the seasons, fixed her mind on the passing years. With a shiver of dread, she realized that for her the beauty and freshness of youth had passed. For the first time she felt that she had been cheated. She did not blame Ned Currie and did not know what to blame. Sadness swept over her. Dropping to her knees, she tried to pray, but instead of prayers words of protest came to her lips. "It is not going to come to me. I will never find happiness. Why do I tell myself lies?" she cried, and an odd sense of relief came with this, her first bold attempt to face the fear that had become a part of her everyday life.

In the year when Alice Hindman became twenty-five two things happened to disturb the dull uneventfulness of her days. Her mother married Bush Milton, the carriage painter of Winesburg, and she herself became a member of the Winesburg Methodist Church. Alice joined the church because she had become frightened by the loneliness of her position in life. Her mother's second marriage had emphasized her isolation. "I am becoming old and queer. If Ned comes he will not want me. In the city where he is living men are perpetually young. There is so much going on that they do not have time to grow old," she told herself with a grim little smile, and went resolutely about the business of becoming acquainted with people. Every Thursday evening when the store had closed she went to a prayer meeting in the basement of the church and on Sunday evening attended a meeting of an organization called The Epworth League.

When Will Hurley, a middle-aged man who clerked in a drug store and who also belonged to the church, offered to walk home with her she did not protest. "Of course I will not let him make a practice of being with me, but if he comes to see me once in a long time there can be no harm in that," she told herself, still determined in her loyalty to Ned Currie.

Without realizing what was happening, Alice was trying feebly at first, but with growing determination, to get a new hold upon life. Beside the drug clerk she walked in silence, but sometimes in the

darkness as they went stolidly along she put out her hand and touched softly the folds of his coat. When he left her at the gate before her mother's house she did not go indoors, but stood for a moment by the door. She wanted to call to the drug clerk, to ask him to sit with her in the darkness on the porch before the house, but was afraid he would not understand. "It is not him that I want," she told herself; "I want to avoid being so much alone. If I am not careful I will grow unaccustomed to being with people."

During the early fall of her twenty-seventh year a passionate restlessness took possession of Alice. She could not bear to be in the company of the drug clerk, and when, in the evening, he came to walk with her she sent him away. Her mind became intensely active and when, weary from the long hours of standing behind the counter in the store, she went home and crawled into bed, she could not sleep. With staring eyes she looked into the dark- ness. Her imagination, like a child awakened from long sleep, played about the room. Deep within her there was something that would not be cheated by phantasies and that demanded some definite answer from life.

Alice took a pillow into her arms and held it tightly against her breasts. Getting out of bed, she arranged a blanket so that in the darkness it looked like a form lying between the sheets and, kneeling beside the bed, she caressed it, whispering words over and over, like a refrain. "Why doesn't something happen? Why am I left here alone?" she muttered. Although she sometimes thought of Ned Currie, she no longer depended on him. Her desire had grown vague. She did not want Ned Currie or any other man. She wanted to be loved, to have something answer the call that was growing louder and louder within her.

And then one night when it rained Alice had an adventure. It frightened and confused her. She had come home from the store at nine and found the house empty. Bush Milton had gone off to town and her mother to the house of a neighbor. Alice went upstairs to her room and undressed in the darkness. For a moment she stood by the window hearing the rain beat against the glass and then a strange desire took possession of her. Without stopping to think of what she intended to do, she ran downstairs through the dark house and out into

the rain. As she stood on the little grass plot before the house and felt the cold rain on her body a mad desire to run naked through the streets took possession of her.

She thought that the rain would have some creative and wonderful effect on her body. Not for years had she felt so full of youth and courage. She wanted to leap and run, to cry out, to find some other lonely human and embrace him. On the brick sidewalk before the house a man stumbled homeward. Alice started to run. A wild, desperate mood took possession of her. "What do I care who it is. He is alone, and I will go to him," she thought; and then without stopping to consider the possible result of her madness, called softly. "Wait!" she cried. "Don't go away. Whoever you are, you must wait."

The man on the sidewalk stopped and stood listening. He was an old man and somewhat deaf. Putting his hand to his mouth, he shouted. "What? What say?" he called.

Alice dropped to the ground and lay trembling. She was so frightened at the thought of what she had done that when the man had gone on his way she did not dare get to her feet, but crawled on hands and knees through the grass to the house. When she got to her own room she bolted the door and drew her dressing table across the doorway. Her body shook as with a chill and her hands trembled so that she had difficulty getting into her nightdress. When she got into bed she buried her face in the pillow and wept brokenheartedly. "What is the matter with me? I will do something dreadful if I am not careful," she thought, and turning her face to the wall, began trying to force herself to face bravely the fact that many people must live and die alone, even in Winesburg.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Reception theory (reader response literary theory) is an approach to textual analysis which means that any type of text (any creative work) is interpreted by addressees (i.e. readers) based on their thesaurus (background knowledge) and life experiences. In essence, the

meaning of a text is not inherent within the text itself, but is created within the relationship between the text and the reader.[91] "…what is significant is what a text means to the reader, whatever the writer may have intended, or whatever the text itself may objectively appear to mean" [Widdowson, 1992: 8]. [92]

Cycle

A cycle (or, as it is sometimes called, sequence) is a group of poems, stories or plays which are united by central theme.[93] [Cuddon, 1982: 213]. Cycle contains autonomous stories which create composite whole. S. Mann notes that "stories in the cycle are both self-sufficient and interrelated" [Mann, 1989: 15].[94]

Forrest Ingram, in his famous work *Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century*, gives a thorough analysis of this genre and defines cycle as "a book of short stories so linked to each other by their author that the reader's successive experience on various levels of the pattern of the whole significantly modifies his [or her] experience of its component parts."[95] [Ingram, 1971:19]. **Ingram** presents detailed readings of integrated collections by Joyce, Kafka, Anderson, and Faulkner.

Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio is, perhaps, the most vivid example of the form. The cycle is achieved by setting (all twenty-four stories are linked through one and the same setting); themes (e.g. loneliness and frustration); characters (certain characters are repeated in the stories, e.g. the protagonist George Willard is the common character in most (seventeen) of the stories).

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91. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reception_theory http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reception_theory
92. Widdowson H.G. Practical Stylistics.- Oxford University Press, 1992.
93. Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory, J.A., Cuddon, 1982.
94. Mann, Susan Garland. The Short Story cycle : A Genre Companion and Reference Guide. New York: Greenwood, 1989.
95. Ingram, Forrest L. Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century. The Hague: Mouton, 1971.

Interpretation and Analysis

Style

Anderson's style of storytelling is simple, though below the surface – complex. His short narrative fiction is characterized by peculiar narrative structure. His story-telling art is exceptionally singular. The author directly addresses the reader. Instead of following Freitag's triangle, he tells broken up stories and presents episodic, sometimes fragmented narration.

Themes

In *Winesburg, Ohio* twenty-four sections involve the themes connected, though not directly, as the chapters of an ordinary novel would be. Although themes in *Winesburg, Ohio* are not exactly one and the same, the short tales formulate the themes common to each story – desperate loneliness, isolation, alienation, unhappy relationships (unhappy marriages, unhappy love, etc), and an urgent need for someone.

What exactly is the theme of "Mother"? Is it strange mother-son relationship? Is it strange possessiveness? How many themes can you draw out of the story?

What exactly is the theme of "Adventure"? In what way is the major concept of the text connected with the title of the story?

Are Anderson's overarching themes reflected in *Mother* or in *Adventure?*

SETTING

All twenty-four short stories are set in the imaginary town of Winesburg, Ohio. The town of Winesburg, which is the setting for all the stories, is based on Sherwood Anderson's memories of Clyde, his hometown. Critics note that the stories are autobiographical. They argue that the character in seventeen stories, George Willard is the author himself and it is believed that many of the other characters were old neighbors and acquaintances from Clyde.

Mood

The mood of Winesburg, Ohio stories is generally serious, solemn, dejected, depressive and even tragic.

What is the mood in ***Mother*** or in ***Adventure?***

Plot Structure

The writer turned the whole emphasis from plot to themes and characters. That is why the importance of plot is quite reduced.

Analyze the plot structure in Mother.

How does the story open?

When does the climax occur in the story?

Can you prove that the story ends anti-climatically?

Analyze the plot structure of Adventure.

How does the story open?

The character is not simply recalling what happened in the past, in fact the author is taking the characters and us (readers) back in time to the events.

What literary device is employed to create such an effect?

Find the passage when the story gets back to the present.

When does the climax occur?

Symbols

Winesburg, Ohio is rich with symbolism.

Consider the following extract from Mother

"Sometimes as they sat thus a picture of village life presented itself to them. At the back door of his shop appeared Abner Groff with a stick or an empty milk bottle in his hand. For a long time there was a feud between the baker and a grey cat that belonged to Sylvester West, the druggist. The boy and his mother saw the cat creep into the door of the bakery and presently emerge followed by the baker, who swore and waved his arms about. The baker`s eyes were small and red and his black hair and beard were filled with flour dust. Sometimes he was so angry that, although the cat had disappeared, he hurled sticks, bits of broken glass, and even some of the tools of his trade about. Once he broke a window at the back of Sinning`s Hardware Store. In the alley the grey cat crouched behind barrels filled with torn paper and broken bottles above which flew a black swarm of flies. Once when she was alone, and after watching a prolonged and ineffectual outburst on the part of the baker, Elizabeth Willard put her head down on her long white hands and wept. After that she did not look along the alleyway any more, but tried to forget the contest between the bearded man and the cat. It seemed like a rehearsal of her own life, terrible in its vividness."

Does the above passage have any symbolic meaning?

Why did Elizabeth weep? Did the character identify herself with the cat beaten down by cruel people and cruel life?

What can Elizabeth's illness symbolize?

Consider the following passage from Adventure:

"Alice went upstairs to her room and undressed in the darkness. For a moment she stood by the window hearing the rain beat against the glass and then a strange desire took possession of her. Without stopping to think of what she intended to do, she ran downstairs through the dark house and out into the rain. As she stood on the little grass plot before the house and felt the cold rain on her body a mad desire to run naked through the streets took possession of her."

Do you think that her clothes may symbolize her fantasies and dreams? Do you think that shedding the clothes can symbolize realization of the bitter truth?

According to some critics the protagonist's "adventure" in the rain can be understood as a Baptismal purifying process, a need to cleanse herself from her past and Ned, and begin anew, a life without fantasies and dreams.

Characters

Sherwood Anderson places the emphasis on his characters and draws innovative character sketches. Basically, all his characters in Winesburg, Ohio deviate from norm – the writer makes individual grotesques out of them: they are ridiculous, unnatural, and bizarre.

What can you say about characters in *Mother* or in *Adventure*: do they deviate from norms of balance and harmony?

How does the writer create his characters? What language devices does he employ to draw their vivid sketches? How does he describe the Mother's possessiveness**?**

Pay attention to the way the author informs his readers about manic love of mother for her son, which can drive itself to murder of her own husband. *"As a tigress whose cub had been threatened, would she appear, coming out of the shadows, stealing noiselessly."* Find other examples of this kind.

How does the writer portray his characters? Can you identify the characters in the story that are portrayed as morally degraded, emotionally unbalanced, mentally and spiritually disturbed?

Interpret

Why is Elizabeth Williard maddened by the fact that her husband and her son might have a friendly and congenial relationship? Can we regard Elizabeth Willard's husband as an antagonist character?

How can you understand Elizabeth's prayer – *"I will take any blow that may befall if but this my boy be allowed to express something for us both…And do not let him become smart and successful either"?*

Stranger
Katherine Mansfield

It seemed to the little crowd on the **wharf**[96] that she was never going to move again. There she lay, immense, motionless on the grey **crinkled**[97] water, a **loop**[98] of smoke above her, an immense flock of gulls screaming and diving after the galley droppings at the stern. You could just see little couples parading – little flies walking up and down the dish on the grey crinkled tablecloth. Other flies clustered and **swarm**[99] at the edge. Now there was a gleam of white on the lower deck – the cook's apron or the stewardess perhaps. Now a tiny black spider raced up the ladder on to the bridge.

In the front of the crowd a strong-looking, middle-aged man, dressed very well, very snugly in a grey overcoat, grey silk scarf, thick gloves and dark felt hat, marched up and down, twirling his folded umbrella. He seemed to be the leader of the little crowd on the wharf and at the same time to keep them together. He was something between the sheep-dog and the shepherd.

But what a fool – what a fool he had been not to bring any glasses! There wasn't a pair of glasses between the whole lot of them.

"Curious thing, Mr. Scott, that none of us thought of glasses. We might have been able to stir 'em up a bit. We might have managed a little signalling. 'Don't hesitate to land. Natives harmless.' Or: 'A welcome awaits you. All is forgiven.' What? Eh?"

Mr. Hammond's quick, eager glance, so nervous and yet so friendly and confiding, took in everybody on the wharf, roped in even those old chaps lounging against the **gangways**.[100] They knew, every man-jack of them, that Mrs. Hammond was on that boat, and that he was so tremendously excited it never entered his head not to believe that this marvellous fact meant something to them too. It warmed

96. Quay, dock
97. Wrinkled, creased
98. circle
99. Grouped, crowded
100. passage

his heart towards them. They were, he decided, as decent a crowd of people – Those old chaps over by the gangways, too – fine, solid old chaps. What chests – by Jove! And he squared his own, plunged his thick-gloved hands into his pockets, rocked from heel to toe.

"Yes, my wife's been in Europe for the last ten months. On a visit to our eldest girl, who was married last year. I brought her up here, as far as Salisbury, myself. So I thought I'd better come and fetch her back. Yes, yes, yes." The shrewd grey eyes narrowed again and searched anxiously, quickly, the motionless liner. Again his overcoat was unbuttoned. Out came the thin, butter-yellow watch again, and for the twentieth – fiftieth – hundredth time he made the calculation.

"Let me see now. It was two fifteen when the doctor's launch went off. Two fifteen. It is now exactly twenty-eight minutes past four. That is to say, the doctor's been gone two hours and thirteen minutes. Two hours and thirteen minutes! Whee-ooh!" He gave a queer little half-whistle and snapped his watch to again. "But I think we should have been told if there was anything up – don't you, Mr. Gaven?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Hammond! I don't think there's anything to – anything to worry about," said Mr. Gaven, knocking out his pipe against the heel of his shoe. "At the same time – "

"Quite so! Quite so!" cried Mr. Hammond. "Dashed annoying!" He paced quickly up and down and came back again to his stand between Mr. and Mrs. Scott and Mr. Gaven.

"It's getting quite dark, too," and he waved his folded umbrella as though the **dusk**[101] at least might have had the decency to keep off for a bit. But the dusk came slowly, spreading like a slow stain over the water. Little Jean Scott dragged at her mother's hand.

"I wan' my tea, mammy!" she wailed.

"I expect you do," said Mr. Hammond. "I expect all these ladies want their tea." And his kind, flushed, almost pitiful glance roped them all in again. He wondered whether Janey was having a final cup of tea in the saloon out there. He hoped so; he thought not. It would be just like her not to leave the deck. In that case perhaps the deck steward would bring her up a cup. If he'd been there he'd have got it for her – somehow. And for a moment he was on deck, standing

101. Sunset, twilight

over her, watching her little hand fold round the cup in the way she had, while she drank the only cup of tea to be got on board...But now he was back here, and the Lord only knew when that cursed Captain would stop hanging about in the stream. He took another turn, up and down, up and down. He walked as far as the cab-stand to make sure his driver hadn't disappeared; back he swerved again to the little flock huddled in the shelter of the banana crates. Little Jean Scott was still wanting her tea. Poor little beggar! He wished he had a bit of chocolate on him.

"Here, Jean!" he said. "Like a lift up?" And easily, gently, he swung the little girl on to a higher barrel. The movement of holding her, steadying her, relieved him wonderfully, lightened his heart.

"Hold on," he said, keeping an arm round her.

"Oh, don't worry about Jean, Mr. Hammond!" said Mrs. Scott.

"That's all right, Mrs. Scott. No trouble. It's a pleasure. Jean's a little pal of mine, aren't you, Jean?"

"Yes, Mr. Hammond," said Jean, and she ran her finger down the **dent**[102] of his felt hat.

But suddenly she caught him by the ear and gave a loud scream. "Lo-ok, Mr. Hammond! She's moving! Look, she's coming in!"

By Jove! So she was. At last! She was slowly, slowly turning round. A bell sounded far over the water and a great **spout**[103] of steam gushed into the air. The gulls rose; they fluttered away like bits of white paper. And whether that deep throbbing was her engines or his heart Mr. Hammond couldn't say. He had to nerve himself to bear it, whatever it was. At that moment old Captain Johnson, the harbour-master, came striding down the wharf, a leather portfolio under his arm.

"Jean'll be all right," said Mr. Scott. "I'll hold her." He was just in time. Mr. Hammond had forgotten about Jean. He sprang away to greet old Captain Johnson.

"Well, Captain," the eager, nervous voice rang out again, "you've taken pity on us at last."

"It's no good blaming me, Mr. Hammond," **wheezed**[104] old Cap-

102. Cavity, hollow
103. Spurt, gush
104. Breathe with difficulty, gasp, rasp

tain Johnson, staring at the liner. “You got Mrs. Hammond on board, ain’t yer?”

“Yes, yes!” said Hammond, and he kept by the harbour-master’s side. “Mrs. Hammond’s there. Hul-lo! We shan’t be long now!”

With her telephone ring-ringing, the thrum of her screw filling the air, the big liner bore down on them, cutting sharp through the dark water so that big white shavings curled to either side. Hammond and the harbour- master kept in front of the rest. Hammond took off his hat; he **raked**[105] the decks – they were crammed with passengers; he waved his hat and bawled a loud, strange “Hul-lo!” across the water; and then turned round and burst out laughing and said something – nothing – to old Captain Johnson.

“Seen her?” asked the harbour-master.

“No, not yet. Steady – wait a bit!” And suddenly, between two great clumsy idiots – “Get out of the way there!” he signed with his umbrella – he saw a hand raised – a white glove shaking a handkerchief. Another moment, and – thank God, thank God! – there she was. There was Janey. There was Mrs. Hammond, yes, yes, yes – standing by the rail and smiling and nodding and waving her handkerchief.

“Well that’s first class – first class! Well, well, well!” He positively stamped. Like lightning he drew out his cigar-case and offered it to old Captain Johnson. “Have a cigar, Captain! They’re pretty good. Have a couple! Here” – and he pressed all the cigars in the case on the harbour – master – “I’ve a couple of boxes up at the hotel.”

“Thanks, Mr. Hammond!” wheezed old Captain Johnson.

Hammond stuffed the cigar-case back. His hands were shaking, but he’d got hold of himself again. He was able to face Janey. There she was, leaning on the rail, talking to some woman and at the same time watching him, ready for him. It struck him, as the gulf of water closed, how small she looked on that huge ship. His heart was **wrung**[106] with such a spasm that he could have cried out. How little she looked to have come all that long way and back by herself! Just like her, though.

Just like Janey. She had the courage of a – And now the crew

105. searched
106. Pressed, compressed

had come forward and parted the passengers; they had lowered the rails for the gangways.

The voices on shore and the voices on board flew to greet each other.

"All well?"

"All well." "How's mother?"

"Much better."

"Hullo, Jean!"

"Hillo, Aun' Emily!"

"Had a good voyage?"

"Splendid!"

"Shan't be long now!"

"Not long now."

The engines stopped. Slowly she edged to the wharf-side.

"Make way there – make way – make way!" And the wharf hands brought the heavy gangways along at a sweeping run. Hammond signed to Janey to stay where she was. The old harbour-master stepped forward; he followed. As to "ladies first," or any rot like that, it never entered his head.

"After you, Captain!" he cried genially. And, treading on the old man's heels, he strode up the gangway on to the deck in a bee-line to Janey, and Janey was clasped in his arms.

"Well, well, well! Yes, yes! Here we are at last!" he stammered. It was all he could say. And Janey emerged, and her cool little voice – the only voice in the world for him – said,

"Well, darling! Have you been waiting long?"

No; not long. Or, at any rate, it didn't matter. It was over now. But the point was, he had a cab waiting at the end of the wharf. Was she ready to go off. Was her luggage ready? In that case they could cut off sharp with her cabin luggage and let the rest go hang until to-morrow. He bent over her and she looked up with her familiar half-smile. She was just the same. Not a day changed. Just as he'd always known her. She laid her small hand on his sleeve.

"How are the children, John?" she asked.

(Hang the children!) "Perfectly well. Never better in their lives."

"Haven't they sent me letters?"

"Yes, yes – of course! I've left them at the hotel for you to digest later on."

"We can't go quite so fast," said she. "I've got people to say good-bye to – and then there's the Captain." As his face fell she gave his arm a small understanding squeeze. "If the Captain comes off the bridge I want you to thank him for having looked after your wife so beautifully." Well, he'd got her. If she wanted another ten minutes – As he gave way she was surrounded. The whole first-class seemed to want to say good-bye to Janey.

"Good-bye, dear Mrs. Hammond! And next time you're in Sydney I'll expect you."

"Darling Mrs. Hammond! You won't forget to write to me, will you?"

"Well, Mrs. Hammond, what this boat would have been without you!"

It was as plain as a pikestaff that she was by far the most popular woman on board. And she took it all – just as usual. Absolutely composed. Just her little self – just Janey all over; standing there with her veil thrown back. Hammond never noticed what his wife had on. It was all the same to him whatever she wore. But today he did notice that she wore a black "costume" – didn't they call it? – with white frills, trimmings he supposed they were, at the neck and sleeves. All this while Janey handed him round.

"John, dear!" And then: "I want to introduce you to –"

Finally they did escape, and she led the way to her state-room. To follow Janey down the passage that she knew so well – that was so strange to him; to part the green curtains after her and to step into the cabin that had been hers gave him exquisite happiness. But – confound it! – the stewardess was there on the floor, strapping up the rugs.

"That's the last, Mrs. Hammond," said the stewardess, rising and pulling down her cuffs.

He was introduced again, and then Janey and the stewardess disappeared into the passage. He heard whisperings. She was getting the tipping business over, he supposed. He sat down on the striped sofa and took his hat off. There were the rugs she had taken with her; they

looked good as new. All her luggage looked fresh, perfect. The labels were written in her beautiful little clear hand – "Mrs. John Hammond."

"Mrs. John Hammond!" He gave a long sigh of content and leaned back, crossing his arms. The strain was over. He felt he could have sat there for ever sighing his relief – the relief at being rid of that horrible tug, pull, grip on his heart. The danger was over. That was the feeling. They were on dry land again.

But at that moment Janey's head came round the corner. "Darling – do you mind? I just want to go and say good-bye to the doctor."

Hammond started up. "I'll come with you."

"No, no!" she said. "Don't bother. I'd rather not. I'll not be a minute."

And before he could answer she was gone. He had half a mind to run after her; but instead he sat down again.

Would she really not be long? What was the time now? Out came the watch; he stared at nothing. That was rather queer of Janey, wasn't it? Why couldn't she have told the stewardess to say good-bye for her? Why did she have to go chasing after the ship's doctor? She could have sent a note from the hotel even if the affair had been urgent. Urgent? Did it – could it mean that she had been ill on the voyage – she was keeping something from him? That was it! He seized his hat. He was going off to find that fellow and to wring the truth out of him at all costs. He thought he'd noticed just something. She was just a touch too calm – too steady. From the very first moment –

The curtain rang. Janey was back. He jumped to his feet.

"Janey, have you been ill on this voyage? You have!"

"Ill?" Her airy little voice mocked him. She stepped over the rugs, and came up close, touched his breast, and looked up at him.

"Darling," she said, "don't frighten me. Of course I haven't! Whatever makes you think I have? Do I look ill?"

But Hammond didn't see her. He only felt that she was looking at him and that there was no need to worry about anything. She was here to look after things. It was all right. Everything was.

The gentle pressure of her hand was so calming that he put his

over hers to hold it there. And she said:

"Stand still. I want to look at you. I haven't seen you yet. You've had your beard beautifully trimmed, and you look – younger, I think, and decidedly thinner! Bachelor life agrees with you."

"Agrees with me!" He groaned for love and caught her close again. And again, as always, he had the feeling that he was holding something that never was quite his-his. Something too delicate, too precious, that would fly away once he let go.

"For God's sake let's get off to the hotel so that we can be by ourselves!" And he rang the bell hard for some one to look sharp with the luggage.

Walking down the wharf together she took his arm. He had her on his arm again. And the difference it made to get into the cab after Janey – to throw the red-and-yellow striped blanket round them both – to tell the driver to hurry because neither of them had had any tea. No more going without his tea or pouring out his own. She was back. He turned to her, squeezed her hand, and said gently, teasingly, in the "special" voice he had for her: "Glad to be home again, dearie?" She smiled; she didn't even bother to answer, but gently she drew his hand away as they came to the brighter streets.

"We've got the best room in the hotel," he said. "I wouldn't be put off with another. And I asked the chambermaid to put in a bit of a fire in case you felt chilly. She's a nice, attentive girl. And I thought now we were here we wouldn't bother to go home to-morrow, but spend the day looking round and leave the morning after. Does that suit you? There's no hurry, is there? The children will have you soon enough...I thought a day's sight-seeing might make a nice break in your journey – eh, honey?"

"Have you taken the tickets for the day after?" she asked.

"I should think I have!" He unbuttoned his overcoat and took out his bulging pocket-book. "Here we are! I reserved a first-class carriage to Cooktown. There it is – 'Mr. and Mrs. John Hammond.' I thought we might as well do ourselves comfortably, and we don't want other people butting in, do we? But if you'd like to stop here a bit longer – ?"

"Oh, no!" said Janey quickly. "Not for the world! The day after to- morrow, then. And the children – "

But they had reached the hotel. The manager was standing in the broad, brilliantly-lighted porch. He came down to greet them. A porter ran from the hall for their boxes.

"Well, Mr. Arnold, here's Mrs. Hammond at last!"

The manager led them through the hall himself and pressed the elevator- bell. Hammond knew there were business pals of his sitting at the little hall tables having a drink before dinner. But he wasn't going to risk interruption; he looked neither to the right nor the left. They could think what they pleased. If they didn't understand, the more fools they – and he stepped out of the lift, unlocked the door of their room, and shepherded Janey in. The door shut. Now, at last, they were alone together. He turned up the light. The curtains were drawn; the fire blazed. He flung his hat on to the huge bed and went towards her

But – would you believe it! – again they were interrupted. This time it was the porter with the luggage. He made two journeys of it, leaving the door open in between, taking his time, whistling through his teeth in the corridor. Hammond paced up and down the room, tearing off his gloves, tearing off his scarf. Finally he flung his overcoat on to the bedside.

At last the fool was gone. The door clicked. Now they were alone. Said Hammond: "I feel I'll never have you to myself again. These cursed people! Janey" – and he bent his flushed, eager gaze upon her – "let's have dinner up here. If we go down to the restaurant we'll be interrupted, and then there's the confounded music" (the music he'd praised so highly, applauded so loudly last night!). "We shan't be able to hear each other speak. Let's have something up here in front of the fire. It's too late for tea. I'll order a little supper, shall I? How does that idea strike you?"

"Do, darling!" said Janey. "And while you're away – the children's letters – "

"Oh, later on will do!" said Hammond.

"But then we'd get it over," said Janey. "And I'd first have time to – "

"Oh, I needn't go down!" explained Hammond. "I'll just ring and give the order...you don't want to send me away, do you?"

Janey shook her head and smiled.

"But you're thinking of something else. You're worrying about something," said Hammond. "What is it? Come and sit here – come and sit on my knee before the fire."

"I'll just unpin my hat," said Janey, and she went over to the dressing- table. "A-ah!" She gave a little cry.

"What is it?"

"Nothing, darling. I've just found the children's letters. That's all right! They will keep. No hurry now!" She turned to him, clasping them. She tucked them into her frilled blouse. She cried quickly, gaily: "Oh, how typical this dressing-table is of you!"

"Why? What's the matter with it?" said Hammond.

"If it were floating in eternity I should say 'John!'" laughed Janey, staring at the big bottle of hair tonic, the wicker bottle of eau-de-Cologne, the two hair-brushes, and a dozen new collars tied with pink tape. "Is this all your luggage?"

"Hang my luggage!" said Hammond; but all the same he liked being laughed at by Janey. "Let's talk. Let's get down to things. Tell me" – and as Janey perched on his knees he leaned back and drew her into the deep, ugly chair – "tell me you're really glad to be back, Janey."

"Yes, darling, I am glad," she said.

But just as when he embraced her he felt she would fly away, so Hammond never knew – never knew for dead certain that she was as glad as he was. How could he know? Would he ever know? Would he always have this **craving**[107] – this **pang**[108] like hunger, somehow, to make Janey so much part of him that there wasn't any of her to escape? He wanted to blot out everybody, everything. He wished now he'd turned off the light. That might have brought her nearer. And now those letters from the children rustled in her blouse. He could have **chucked**[109] them into the fire.

"Janey," he whispered.

"Yes, dear?" She lay on his breast, but so lightly, so remotely. Their breathing rose and fell together.

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107. Desire, passion, hunger
108. Severe pain, spasm
109. threw

"Janey!"

"What is it?"

"Turn to me," he whispered. A slow, deep flush flowed into his forehead. "Kiss me, Janey! You kiss me!"

It seemed to him there was a tiny pause – but long enough for him to suffer torture – before her lips touched his, firmly, lightly – kissing them as she always kissed him, as though the kiss – how could he describe it? – confirmed what they were saying, signed the contract. But that wasn't what he wanted; that wasn't at all what he thirsted for. He felt suddenly, horrible tired.

"If you knew," he said, opening his eyes, "what it's been like – waiting today. I thought the boat never would come in. There we were, hanging about. What kept you so long?"

She made no answer. She was looking away from him at the fire. The flames hurried – hurried over the coals, **flickered**,[110] fell.

"Not asleep, are you?" said Hammond, and he jumped her up and down.

"No," she said. And then: "Don't do that, dear. No, I was thinking. As a matter of fact," she said, "one of the passengers died last night – a man. That's what held us up. We brought him in – I mean, he wasn't buried at sea. So, of course, the ship's doctor and the shore doctor – "

"What was it?" asked Hammond uneasily. He hated to hear of death. He hated this to have happened. It was, in some queer way, as though he and Janey had met a funeral on their way to the hotel.

"Oh, it wasn't anything in the least infectious!" said Janey. She was speaking scarcely above her breath. "It was heart." A pause. "Poor fellow!" she said. "Quite young." And she watched the fire flicker and fall. "He died in my arms," said Janey.

The blow was so sudden that Hammond thought he would faint. He couldn't move; he couldn't breathe. He felt all his strength flowing – flowing into the big dark chair, and the big dark chair held him fast, gripped him, forced him to bear it.

"What?" he said dully. "What's that you say?"

"The end was quite peaceful," said the small voice. "He just" – and Hammond saw her lift her gentle hand – "breathed his life away

110. Shine unsteadily, glimmer, flash

at the end." And her hand fell.

"Who – else was there?" Hammond managed to ask.

"Nobody. I was alone with him."

Ah, my God, what was she saying! What was she doing to him! This would kill him! And all the while she spoke:

"I saw the change coming and I sent the steward for the doctor, but the doctor was too late. He couldn't have done anything, anyway."

"But – why you, why you?" moaned Hammond.

At that Janey turned quickly, quickly searched his face.

"You don't mind, John, do you?" she asked.

"You don't – It's nothing to do with you and me."

Somehow or other he managed to shake some sort of smile at her. Somehow or other he stammered: "No – go – on, go on! I want you to tell me."

"But, John darling – "

"Tell me, Janey!"

"There's nothing to tell," she said, wondering. "He was one of the first- class passengers. I saw he was very ill when he came on board... But he seemed to be so much better until yesterday. He had a severe attack in the afternoon – excitement – nervousness, I think, about arriving. And after that he never recovered."

"But why didn't the stewardess – "

"Oh, my dear – the stewardess!" said Janey. "What would he have felt? And besides...he might have wanted to leave a message...to – "

"Didn't he?" muttered Hammond. "Didn't he say anything?"

"No, darling, not a word!" She shook her head softly. "All the time I was with him he was too weak...he was too weak even to move a finger..."

Janey was silent. But her words, so light, so soft, so chill, seemed to hover in the air, to rain into his breast like snow.

The fire had gone red. Now it fell in with a sharp sound and the room was colder. Cold crept up his arms. The room was huge, immense, glittering. It filled his whole world. There was the great blind bed, with his coat flung across it like some headless man saying his prayers. There was the luggage, ready to be carried away again, any-

where, tossed into trains, **carted**[111] on to boats.

...”He was too weak. He was too weak to move a finger.” And yet he died in Janey’s arms. She – who’d never – never once in all these years – never on one single solitary occasion –

No; he mustn’t think of it. Madness lay in thinking of it. No, he wouldn’t face it. He couldn’t stand it. It was too much to bear!

And now Janey touched his tie with her fingers. She pinched the edges of the tie together.

“You’re not – sorry I told you, John darling? It hasn’t made you sad? It hasn’t spoilt our evening – our being alone together?”

But at that he had to hide his face. He put his face into her bosom and his arms enfolded her.

Spoilt their evening! Spoilt their being alone together! They would never be alone together again.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Narrative Discourse

A narrative is a form of communication. According to G.Genette, every text discloses traces of narration, all narrative is necessarily *diegesis* (telling), and *mimesis* (showing) by making the story real and alive. A *story-teller or* narrator is present in all verbally told stories.

Literary Narrative Communication

The model of literary narrative communication is most clearly shown in R. Jakobson’s most famous work linguistics and poetics. R. Jakobson – whose linguistic studies merged with literary studies, described six factors contributing to verbal communication: 1.the addresser – or encoder (speaker, narrator, author); 2.The addressee – or decoder (hearer, reader, viewer, user); 3.Code (usually a language system); 4.Message (text; discourse, what is being said); 5.Context (referent; about what?); 6. The contact (channel of communication; psychological or physical connection; live speech, writing, and so on).

111. Carried with difficulty

There is a function of communication corresponding to each of these, respectively: emotive (or expressive – emphasis on addresser), phatic (emphasis on contact, clearing channel for communication), conative (appellative), metalingual (linguistic: focus on code), referential (denotative – focus on context), poetic (directed toward the message and is the central function for verbal art) [Jakobson, 1960: 350-377].[112] Thus, according to him, narratorial discourse (like any other discourse) can serve a variety of "functions," mainly: (a)an addressee-oriented "phatic function" (maintaining contact with the addressee), (b) an "appellative function" (persuading the addressee to believe or do something), (c) an "emotive" or "expressive function" (expressing his/her own subjectivity).

NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Narrative perspective is the point of view adopted by the narrator, which G. Genette calls focalization. "So by focalization I certainly mean a restriction of "field" – actually, that is, a selection of narrative information with respect to what was traditionally called *omniscience*" [Genette: 1988, p. 74].[113] These are matters of perception: the one who perceives is not necessarily the one who tells, and vice versa.

G. Genette distinguishes three kinds of focalization:

1. *Zero focalization*: The narrator knows more than the characters. He may know the facts about all of the protagonists, as well as their thoughts and gestures. This is the traditional "omniscient narrator."

2. *Internal focalization*: The narrator knows as much as the focal character. This character filters the information provided to the reader. He cannot report the thoughts of other characters.

3. *External focalization*: The narrator knows less than the characters. He acts a bit like a camera lens, following the protagonists' actions and gestures from the outside; he is unable to guess their thoughts.[114]

112. R.Jakobson, "Closing Statements: Linguistics and Poetics" (in Thomas A. Sebeok, Style In Language, Cambridge Massachusetts, MIT Press, 1960).
113. Genette Gerald, Narrative Discourse Revisited, Cornell University, 1988.
114. Ibid.

Interpretation and Analysis

Literary and Language Focus

Implication and Contrast

Implication is the suggestion that is not expressed directly. Implication can be conveyed by different techniques, one of them is contrast.

In the opening lines of the story the author on the one hand, describes pleasant and tranquil atmosphere on the wharf – "immense, motionless on the grey crinkled water… an immense flock of gulls screaming and diving", and, on the other, dirty and somewhat nervous – "flies walking up and down the dish on the grey crinkled tablecloth. Other flies clustered and swarmed at the edge …a tiny black spider raced up the ladder…"

Why does she need to create such contrast?

The author describes the protagonist (Mr. Hammond) as good-looking and well-dressed – " strong-looking, middle-aged man, dressed very well, very snugly in a grey overcoat, grey silk scarf, thick gloves and dark felt hat." Why does she tell the readers that he was "something between the sheep-dog and the shepherd"?

What does the detail "twirling the folded umbrella" might inform the readers? Does the fact that he seemed to be the leader come to clash with his nervous "marching up and down"?

Later the writer again emphasizes the fact that Mr. Hammond was nervous and at the same time friendly and confiding. ("Mr Hammond's quick, eager glance, so nervous and yet so friendly and confiding, took in everybody").

Contrast

Literary Contrast is the juxtaposition of disparate or opposed images, ideas or both, to heighten and clarify a scene, theme or episode.[115]

What is the role of contrast throughout the story?

When and why does the author employ this literary device in the story?

What is the role of contrast in the exposition?

Does the author refer to this literary device when she draws character sketches?

Pay attention to the character's discourse – how she addresses her husband:

"Well, darling! Have you been waiting long?"

"John, dear!"; "Darling – do you mind? I just want to go and say good-bye to the doctor."

"Darling," she said, "don't frighten me."

"Stand still. I want to look at you. I haven't seen you yet. You've had your beard beautifully trimmed, and you look – younger, I think, and decidedly thinner! Bachelor life agrees with you."

"Do, darling!"

"Nothing, darling. I've just found the children's letters. "

"Don't do that, dear".

"No, darling, not a word!"

"You're not – sorry I told you, John darling? It hasn't made you sad? It hasn't spoilt our evening – our being alone together?"

115. Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory, J.A Cuddon, 1991

Interpret

As you noticed the character employs a lot of endearing words and phrases. Is estrangement between the wife and husband expressed verbally?

Title

What do you think, why the story is called "Stranger"? Who is a "stranger" in the story?

Narrative Modes in Stranger

All critics give emphasis to the fact that K.Mansfield's "Stranger" is written in many shifts of the narrative.

Heterodiegetic and Homodiegetic Narrator

A **narrator** is the speaker or "voice" of the narrative discourse [Genette 1980 : 186]. He or she is the agent who establishes communicative contact with an addressee (the "narrate"), who manages the exposition, who decides what is to be told, how it is to be told (especially, from what point of view, and in what sequence), and what is to be left out.[116]

According to Genette a narrator is called heterodiegetic if he (she) does not take part in the narrated action. Such kind of narrator is usually omniscient (all knowing) or has at least a detailed overview of what is going on at any place of the story at any time.

According to Genette, a **homodiegetic narrator** is a character in the narrated world that she/he describes and gives his/her subjective experiences.

116. Genette, Gerald, Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method, Cornell University Press, 1980, pp.171-172.

Find passages in the story containing heterodiegetic or homodiegetic narration**.**

Entrusted Narrative

V.Kukharenko states that "in contemporary prose, in an effort to make his writing more plausible, to impress the reader with the effect of authenticity of the described events, the writer entrusts some fictitious character (who might also participate in the narrated events) with the task of story-telling. The writer himself thus hides behind the figure of the narrator, presents all the events of the story from the latter's viewpoint and only sporadically emerges in the narrative with his own considerations, which may reinforce or contradict those expressed by the narrator. This form of the author's speech is called ***entrusted narrative.*** The structure of the entrusted narrative is much more complicated than that of the author's narrative proper, because instead of one commanding, organizing image of the author, we have the hierarchy of the narrator's image seemingly arranging the pros and cons of the related problem and, looming above the narrator's image, there stands the image of the author, the true and actual creator of it all, responsible for all the views and evaluations of the text and serving the major and predominant force of textual cohesion and unity.

Entrusted narrative can be carried out in the 1st person singular, when the narrator proceeds with his story openly and explicitly, from his own name, as, e.g., in *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, or *The Great Gatsby* by Sc. Fitzgerald, *or All the King's Men by R.f.Warren."* [kukharenko, 1986: 58].[117]

Inner (Interior) Speech (Discourse)

Narrated "silent," "unuttered" character's discourse is most often composed of a variety of discourse (speech) types including **narrated stream of consciousness, quoted stream of consciousness**, **psychonarration, free indirect style, interior monologue, soliloquy,**

117. Kukharenko V.A. A Book of Practice in Stylistics. – M., 1986.

inner voice, internal speech, etc.

V.Kukharenko argues that all the above types can be united under a general term – "inner speech" (interior speech) which presents "silent thoughts," "psychological states" of a character [kukharenko, 1968: 162].[118] According to him, the two terms "character's inner speech" and "character's represented inner speech" should not be confused: "it must be pointed out that we should draw a line between the two terms "character's inner speech" and so called "character's represented inner speech," which also reveals the tendency of depicting character's thinking. The latter is close to the character's inner speech in essence, but differs from it in form: it is rendered in the third person singular and may have the author's qualitative words, i.e. it reflects the presence of the author's viewpoint alongside that of the character, while inner speech belongs to the character completely, formally too, which is materialized through the first-person pronouns" [kukharenko, 1986: 58].[119]

Free Indirect Discourse

Free indirect discourse (or free indirect speech) involves a character's discourse (speech) and also, a narrator's comments or presentation. In other words, free indirect discourse involves both direct and indirect discourse.

According to M.Jahn free indirect discourse can be divided into:

Free indirect speech – the free indirect presentation of a character's words.

Free indirect thought – the free indirect presentation of a character's verbalized thoughts.

Pay attention to the examples below in order to make difference between direct speech, reported speech, and free indirect discourse.

Direct or quoted speech (discourse)

He laid down his bundle and thought of his misfortune. "And just what pleasure have I found, since I came into this world?" he asked.

Normal indirect (i.e., reported) speech (discourse):

118. Кухаренко В.А.- Интерпретация текста, М., «Просвещение», 1968.
119. Kukharenko V.A. A Book of Practice in Stylistics. – M., 1986.

He laid down his bundle and thought of his misfortune. He asked himself what pleasure he had found since he came into the world.

Free indirect speech (discourse):

He laid down his bundle and thought of his misfortune. And just what pleasure had he found, since he came into this world?

Now find passages in "The Stranger" where a text's information is restricted to a character's field of perception and at the same time the narrator's presentation or comments are introduced.

Are the narrative events presented from a character's point of view? What is presented in the story – external or internal focalization?

You-narrative/second-person narrative

You narrative is a narrative in which the protagonist is referred to in the second person. According to M.Jahn, functionally, *you* may refer (a) to the narrator's experiencing Self, (b) to some other character in a homodiegetic world, or (c) to a character in a heterodiegetic world.[120]

The narrator in the story addresses an addressee using the second person pronoun ("you"). ("You could just see").

Is this addressee (a reader), or another character in the story, or hypothetical audience? Can you tell whether "you" is singular or plural?

Style

In her deceptively simple stories, K.Mansfield introduced many new literary techniques. Her stories, "The Stranger" among them, are written in the modernist mode.

Character

Katherine Mansfield in her short stories mainly focuses on the inner world of a character. She is less interested in the character's

120. Jahn: PPP/Narratology

external action, and much of the narration is located within the minds of her characters.

"It was as plain as a pikestaff that she was by far the most popular woman on board. And she took it all – just as usual. Absolutely composed. Just her little self – just Janey all over; standing there with her veil thrown back. Hammond never noticed what his wife had on. It was all the same to him whatever she wore. But to-day he did notice that she wore a black "costume" – didn't they call it? – with white frills, trimmings he supposed they were, at the neck and sleeves. All this while Janey handed him round."

"Oh, it wasn't anything in the least infectious!" said Janey. She was speaking scarcely above her breath. "It was heart." A pause. "Poor fellow!" she said. "Quite young." And she watched the fire flicker and fall. "He died in my arms," said Janey."

"Her cool little voice – the only voice in the world for him."

What do you learn about Janey form the above episodes?

Block characterization

Block characterization is the introductory description of a character, by the narrator, usually on the character's first appearance in the text; a special type of explicit characterization. (Term introduced by Souvage in 1965).

What do you learn from the introductory description of Mr. Hammond?

James Joyce was an Irish author and a key figure in developing stream of consciousness technique in the modern novel. He is considered to be one of the most influential writers of the 20th century who experimented with ways to use language.

Eveline
By James Joyce

SHE sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty **cretonne.**[121] She was tired.

Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps **clacking**[122] along the concrete pavement and afterwards **crunching**[123] on the **cinder**[124] path before the new red houses. One time there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people's children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses in it – not like their little brown houses but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field – the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his **blackthorn**[125] stick; but usually little Keogh used to keep **nix** [126]and call out when he saw her father coming. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home.

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121. A strong cotton or linen with designs printed in colours
122. Clicking, cracking, banging
123. A noise like the sound of something firm being crushed
124. Ashes, amber
125. A prickly bush with black branches, white flowers and sour purple fruit
126. Sl. watch

Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. And yet during all those years she had never found out the name of the priest whose yellowing photograph hung on the wall above the broken harmonium beside the coloured print of the promises made to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque[127]. He had been a school friend of her father. Whenever he showed the photograph to a visitor her father used to pass it with a casual word:

"He is in Melbourne now."

She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life about her. Of course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business. What would they say of her in the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow? Say she was a fool, perhaps; and her place would be filled up by advertisement. Miss Gavan would be glad. She had always had an edge on her, especially whenever there were people listening.

"Miss Hill, don't you see these ladies are waiting?"

"Look lively, Miss Hill, please."

She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores.

But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married – she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father's violence. She knew it was that that had given her the **palpitations.**[128] When they were growing up he had never gone for her like he used to go for Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl but latterly he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother's sake. And no she had nobody to protect her. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the coun-

127. Alacoque was a French nun (1647-1690) who experienced visions of Jesus
128. Heart beating very quickly and in an irregular way

try. Besides, the invariable squabble for money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages – seven shillings – and Harry always sent up what he could but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she used to **squander**[129] the money, that she had no head, that he wasn't going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad on Saturday night. In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday's dinner. Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions. She had hard work to keep the house together and to see that the two young children who had been left to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly. It was hard work – a hard life – but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life.

She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very kind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night-boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him; he was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit. It seemed a few weeks ago. He was standing at the gate, his peaked cap pushed back on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze. Then they had come to know each other. He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home. He took her to see The **Bohemian Girl**[130] and she felt **elated**[131] as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him. He was awfully fond of music and sang a little. People knew that they were courting and, when he sang about the **lass**[132] that loves a sailor, she always felt pleasantly confused. He used to call her Poppens out of fun. First of all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him. He had tales of distant countries. He had started as

129. Waste, throw away, fritter away
130. An opera by the Irish-born composer Michael Balfe (1808 – 1870)
131. Overjoyed, delighted
132. Young woman, girl

a deck boy at a pound a month on a ship of the Allan Line going out to Canada. He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had sailed through the Straits of Magellan and he told her stories of the terrible **Patagonians.**[133] He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres, he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him.

"I know these sailor chaps," he said.

One day he had quarrelled with Frank and after that she had to meet her lover secretly.

The evening deepened in the avenue. The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct. One was to Harry; the other was to her father. Ernest had been her favourite but she liked Harry too. Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been laid up for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic to the Hill of Howth. She remembered her father putting on her mother's bonnet to make the children laugh.

Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne. Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother's illness; she was again in the close dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away and given sixpence. She remembered her father strutting back into the sickroom saying:

"Damned Italians! coming over here!"

As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother's life laid its spell on the very quick of her being – that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness. She trembled as she heard again her mother's voice saying constantly with foolish insistence:

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133. People leaving in the extreme south of South America

"Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!"[134]

She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her.

She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages. Through the wide doors of the sheds she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying in beside the quay wall, with illumined **portholes**.[135] She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a maze of distress, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, tomorrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her distress awoke a **nausea**[136] in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer.

A bell clanged upon her heart. She felt him seize her hand:

"Come!"

All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped with both hands at the iron railing.

"Come!"

No! No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in frenzy. Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish.

"Eveline! Evvy!"

He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

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134. "The end of pleasure is pain (Gaelic – the original language of the Irish)
135. Round windows in the side of the ship, train or aircraft
136. Sickness, vomiting

Stream of Consciousness in Modern Novel

James Joyce, a chief promulgator of the new techniques in modern novel, which owes much to him, was one of the most famous representatives of stream-of-consciousness writers.

Stream of consciousness is considered to be one of the dominant stylistic categories of modernism. The term was coined by W. James and was applied to designate the stream (flow) of individual's inner mental processes. Stream of consciousness fiction is concerned, as R. Humphrey states, with psychic existence and functioning (internal man), depicting inner states of a character – his (her) consciousness. According to J. Mepham, the challenge of stream of consciousness writers was to find ways of writing that would create plausible textual presentations of the imagined thought-streams. It involves presenting in the form **of written text** something that is neither **entirely verbal nor textual**[137] [Mepham, 2003].

The aim of stream of consciousness writers is to depict imagined inner lives of their fictional characters, their psychological state, more precisely their mental and spiritual experiences, which provide "access" to a character's thoughts as if the reader were getting "a live report" from a character's mind. Melvin Friedman says: "The stream of consciousness novel should be regarded as the one which has as its essential concern the exploitation of a wide area of consciousness, generally the entire area, of one or more characters" [Freedman, 1955: 3].[138] The same opinion was expressed by R. Humphrey who stated that "consciousness" indicates the entire area of psychic structure. Stream of consciousness fiction unites whole area of psychic processes – conscious and unconscious, the latter being chaotic, irrational and illogical. But at the same time he emphasized the idea that stream of consciousness is particularly concerned with ***subconscious (pre-***

137. Underlined by the author of the article
138. Friedman, Melvin. Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method. New/ Haven, 1955.

***speech*)** levels of psychic activity [Humphrey, 1968: 3].

Thus, according to the wide-spread definitions of stream of consciousness novels, the range of interest of this kind of literature encompasses the whole structure of human psyche (conscious and unconscious with its levels). But it is particularly concentrated on the unconsciousness (unconscious layers of the psyche). It may be assumed that the area of the "stream of consciousness" activity is rather wide, serving to reveal the levels close to the surface of the psychic structure, as well as (and particularly) the deeper levels.

Forms and Techniques

The satisfactory depiction of consciousness required either the invention of new fictional techniques or a refocusing of the old ones.

According to R. Humphrey there are four basic techniques employed in presenting the stream of consciousness: interior monologue (Humphrey divides it into direct interior monologue and indirect interior monologue); soliloquy; and omniscient description [Ibid, p.23 1968: 23].[139] The latter two forms are used to reveal the psychic level "close to the surface," the first two – depicting the deeper ones.

Omniscient Description

Omniscient description belongs to old fictional technique, which, in a stream of consciousness novel requires "refocusing." This technique is employed in stream of consciousness writing to describe the psychic content of a character in the author's words, written in the third person. The consciousness of the character comes to the reader through the voice of the author.

Consider the extract from Pilgrimage by Dorothy Richardson, which is named as the most vivid example omniscient description:

They were approaching the Georgstrasse with its long-vistaed width and its shops and cafes and pedestrians. An officer in pale blue Prussian uniform passed by flashing a single hard preoccupied glance at each of them in turn. His eyes seemed to Miriam like opaque blue

139. Humphrey R., Stream of Consciousness in the modern Novel, University of California Press, 1968.

glass. She could not remember such eyes in England. They began to walk more quickly. Miriam listened abstractedly to Minna's anticipations of three days at a friend's house when she would visit her parents at the end of the week. Minna's parents, her far-away home on the outskirts of a little town, its garden, their little carriage, the spring, the beautiful country seemed unreal and her efforts to respond and be interested felt like a sort of treachery to her present bliss. . . . Everybody, even docile Minna, always seemed to want to talk about something else. . . .

Suddenly she was aware that Minna was asking her whether, if it was decided that she should leave school at the end of the term, she, Miriam, would come and live with her.

Interior Monologue

Gerald Prince argues that the two terms – "stream of consciousness" and "interior monologue" are frequently associated with each other. In his Dictionary of Narratology he gives the following statements:

"Though interior monologue and stream of consciousness have often been considered interchangeable, they have also frequently been contrasted: The former would present a character's thoughts rather than impressions or perceptions, while the latter would present both impressions and thoughts; or else, the former would respect morphology and syntax, whereas the latter would not … and would thus capture thought in its nascent stage, prior to any logical connection" [Prince, 2003: 94].

Interior monologue is a rather general term which refers to inner activity (regardless of the deeper levels of psychic structure or psychic level "close to the surface").

Direct Interior Monologue

Direct Interior Monologue presents consciousness directly to the reader. Usually the first-person pronoun is employed. The author either completely "disappears" from the narration or interferes negligibly. It is mainly concerned with depicting discontinuity of thought at

the prespeech level.

The most vivid example of direct interior monologue is from the last forty-five pages of *Ulysses* by James Joyce.

Consider the following extract:

…I love flowers Id love to have the whole place swimming in roses God of heaven theres nothing like the nature the wild mountains then the sea and the waves rushing then the beautiful country with fields of oats and wheat and all kinds of things and all the fine cattle going about that would do your heart good to see rivers and lakes and flowers all sorts of shapes and smells and colours springing up even out of the ditches primroses and violets nature it is as for the saying theres no God I wouldn't give a snap of my two fingers for all their learning why don't they go and create something I often asked him atheists or whatever they call themselves go and wash the cobbles off themselves first then they go howling for the priest and they dying and why why because they are afraid of hell on account of their bad conscience ah eyes I know them well who was the first person in the universe before there was anybody that made it all who ah that they don't know neither do I so there you are they might as well try to stop the sun from rising tomorrow the sun shines for you he said the day we were lying among the rhododendrons on Howth head in the grey tweed suit and his straw hat the day I got him to propose to me yes first I gave him the bit of seedcake out of my mouth and it was leap year like now yes 16 years ago my God after that long kiss I near lost my breath yes he said I was a flower of the mountain yes so we are flowers all a womans body yes that was one true thing he said in his life and the sun shines for you today yes that was why I liked him because I saw he understood or felt what a woman is …[J. Joyce, 1960 : 703].

The above extract is taken from, perhaps, the most famous and most extended psycho-narration (as R. Humphrey names it – direct interior monologue) of a character (Molly Bloom) in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, comprising about fifty pages. This section is considered as one stream of fragmentary ideas interrupting each other, without punctuation or explanations.

Indirect Interior Monologue

In indirect interior monologue the author presents unspoken material as if it were directly from the consciousness of a character and, with commentary and description, guides the reader through it. Usually the second- or third-person pronouns are employed. It mainly focuses on the level of consciousness nearer the surface, and even one that illustrates a verbalized thought-level present, though actually unuttered.

Virginia Woolf frequently employs indirect interior monologue in her novels, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse.*

Consider the following extract from Mrs. Dalloway:

Mrs Dallowy MRS. DALLOWAY said she would buy the flowers herself.

For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning-fresh as if issued to children on a beach.

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her, when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, "Musing among the vegetables? " – was that it? – "I prefer men to cauliflowers"-was that it? He must have said it at breakfast one morning when she had gone out on to the terrace-Peter Walsh. He would be back from India one o£ these days, June or July, she forgot which, for his letters were awfully dull; it was his sayings one remembered; his eyes, his pocket-knife, his smile, his grumpiness and, when millions of things had utterly vanished-how strange it was! – a few sayings like this about cabbages.

She stiffened a little on the kerb, waiting for Durtnall's van to pass.

A charming woman, Scrope Purvis thought her (knowing her as one does know people who live next door to one in Westminster); a touch of the bird about her, of the jay, blue-green, light, vivacious, though she was over fifty, and grown very white since her illness. There she perched, never seeing him, waiting to cross, very upright.

For having lived in Westminster-how many years now? over twenty,-one feels even in the midst of the traffic, or waking at night, Clarissa was positive, a par-ticular hush, or solemnity; an indescribable pause; a suspense (but that might be her heart, affected, they said, by influenza) before Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, ir-revocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. Such fools we are, she thought, crossing Victoria Street. For Heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it, creating it every moment afresh; but the veriest frumps, the most dejected of miseries sitting on doorsteps (drink their downfall) do the same; can't be dealt with, she felt positive, by Acts of Parliament for that very reason: they love life. In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the up-roar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sand-wich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June.

Compare the above extract with previously quoted Molly Bloom's monologue.

Which is more conventional in appearance?

Which one is more incoherent?

Science Link

Linguistics

Cohesion

In linguistics cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations that provide links between various parts of a text.

According to Baugrand and Dressler, the first standard of textuality is called cohesion. Linguists confirm that if this standard of

textuality is not satisfied, the text will not be communicative.

Soliloquy

Soliloquy is defined a technique of representing the psychic content and processes of a character directly from character to reader without the presence of the author.

Usually the first-person pronoun is employed and mainly focuses on the surface level of consciousness. It is characterized with greater coherence than the interior monologue.

Most popular example is *As I Lay Dying* by W. Faulkner. The entire novel is composed of the soliloquies of the 14 characters. Consider the extract from this novel:

It's because he stays out there, right under the window, hammering and sawing on that goddamn box. Where she's got to see him. Where every breath she draws is full of his knocking and sawing where she can see him saying See. See what a good one I am making for you. I told him to go somewhere else. I said Good God do you want to see her in it. It's like when he was a little boy and she says if she had some fertilizer she would try to raise some flowers and he taken the bread pan and brought it back from the barn full of dung.

And now them others sitting there, like buzzards. Waiting, fanning themselves. Because I said If you wouldn't keep on sawing and nailing at it until a man cant sleep even and her hands laying on the quilt like two of them roots dug up and tried to wash and you couldn't get them clean. I can see the fan and Dewey Dell's arm. I said if you'd just let her alone. Sawing and knocking, and keeping the air always moving so fast on her face that when you're tired you cant breathe it, and that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less. One lick less until everybody that passes in the road will have to stop and see it and say what a fine carpenter he is. If it had just been me when Cash fell off of that church and if it had just been me when pa laid sick with that load of wood fell on him, it would not be happening with every bastard in the country coming in to stare at her becauseif there is a God what the hell is He for.

Devices

Free association

The chief technique in controlling the movement of "stream" has been an application of the principles of psychological "free association." It is a device which shows how the character's consciousness is switched from one thing to another. Three factors control the association: first, the memory, which is its basis; second, the senses, which guide it; and third, the imagination, which determines its elasticity [Humphrey, 1968 : 43][140]

Montage

Montage is the basic device for the films. In stream of consciousness literature it has the fundamental purpose: to represent the dual aspect of human life – the inner life simultaneously with the outer life. Among the secondary devices of montage Humphrey names the following: "multiple-view," "slow-ups," "fade-outs," "close-ups," "panorama," and "flash-backs."

Discuss James Joyce's *Eveline* according to forms and devices of stream of consciousness writing.

What devices are used to help the reader identify a change of different level of consciousness in *Eveline*? What device is used to show that Eveline's thoughts and memories are switched to the past?

"Stream"

The term "stream,"which initially had a psychological meaning, in modernist fiction implies incessant flow of character's thoughts, sensations, and impressions. But what makes the literary meaning of this term different from that of W.James' is that it implies "checks and interferences" which enable the flow to pass freely from one level of psyche to another. The chief technique in controlling the movement of "stream" has been an application of the principles of psychological

140. Humphrey R., Stream of Consciousness in the modern Novel, University of California Press, 1968.

"free association."

What gives the reader the sense of mental "stream"(flow)?
Disregarding formal syntax rules
Fragmentary sentence structure
Incoherence
Violation of cohesive rules
Illogical thought progression
Lack of standard capitalization and paragraph indention, or complete absence of punctuation

Consider the following extracts from Ulysses by James Joyce and analyze them according to theoretical foundations given above:

… Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the City Arms hotel when he used to be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting for that old faggot Mrs Riordan that he thought he had a great leg of and she never left us a farthing all for masses for herself and her soul greatest miser ever was actually afraid to lay out 4d for her methylated spirit telling me all her ailments she had too much old chat in her about politics and earthquakes and the end of the world let us have a bit of fun first God help the world if all the women were her sort down on bathingsuits and lownecks of course nobody wanted her to wear them I suppose she was pious because no man would look at her twice I hope Ill never be like her a wonder she didnt want us to cover our faces but she was a welleducated woman certainly and her gabby talk about Mr Riordan here and Mr Riordan there I suppose he was glad to get shut of her and her dog smelling my fur and always edging to get up under my petticoats especially then still I like that in him polite to old women like that and waiters and beggars too hes not proud out of nothing but not always if ever he got anything really serious the matter with him its much better for them to go into a hospital where everything is clean but I suppose Id have to dring it into him for a month yes and then wed have a hospital nurse next thing on the carpet have him staying there till they throw him out or a nun maybe like the smutty photo he has

shes as much a nun as Im not yes because theyre so weak and puling when theyre sick they want a woman to get well if his nose bleeds youd think it was O tragic and that dyinglooking one off the south circular when he sprained his foot at the choir party at the sugarloaf Mountain the day I wore that dress Miss Stack bringing him flowers the worst old ones she could find at the bottom of the basket anything at all to get into a mans bedroom with her old maids voice trying to imagine he was dying on account of her to never see thy face again though he looked more like a man with his beard a bit grown in the bed father was the same besides I hate bandaging and dosing when he cut his toe with the razor paring his corns afraid hed get bloodpoisoning but if it was a thing I was sick then wed see what attention only of course the woman hides it not to give all the trouble they do yes he came somewhere Im sure by his appetite anyway love its not or hed be off his feed thinking of her so either it was one of those night women if it was down there he was really and the hotel story he made up a pack of lies to hide it planning it Hynes kept me who did I meet ah yes I met do you remember Menton and who else who let me see that big babbyface I saw him and he not long married flirting with a young girl at Pooles Myriorama and turned my back on him when he slinked out looking quite conscious what harm but he had the impudence to make up to me one time well done to him mouth almighty and his boiled eyes of all the big stupoes I ever met and thats called a solicitor only for I hate having a long wrangle in bed or else if its not that its some little bitch or other he got in with somewhere or picked up on the sly if they only knew him as well as I do yes because the day before yesterday he was scribbling something a letter when I came into the front room to show him Dignams death in the paper as if something told me and he covered it up with the blottingpaper pretending to be thinking about business so very probably that was it to somebody who thinks she has a softy in him because all men get a bit like that at his age especially getting on to forty he is now so as to wheedle any money she can out of him no fool like an old fool and then the usual kissing my bottom was to hide it not that I care two straws now who he does it with or knew before that way though Id like to find out so long as I dont have the two

of them under my nose all the time like that slut that Mary we had in Ontario terrace padding out her false bottom to excite him bad enough to get the smell of those painted women off him once or twice I had a suspicion by getting him to come near me when I found the long hair on his coat without that one when I went into the kitchen pretending he was drinking water 1 woman is not enough for them it was all his fault of course ruining servants then proposing that she could eat at our table on Christmas day if you please O no thank you not in my house stealing my potatoes and the oysters 2/6 per doz going out to see her aunt if you please common robbery so it was but I was sure he had something on with that one it takes me to find out a thing like that he said you have no proof it was her proof O yes her aunt was very fond of oysters but I told her what I thought of her suggesting me to go out to be alone with her I wouldnt lower myself to spy on them the garters I found in her room the Friday she was out that was enough for me a little bit too much her face swelled up on her with temper when I gave her her weeks notice I saw to that better do without them altogether do out the rooms myself quicker only for the damn cooking and throwing out the dirt I gave it to him anyhow either she or me leaves the house I couldnt even touch him if I thought he was with a dirty barefaced liar and sloven like that one denying it up to my face and singing about the place in the W C too because she knew she was too well off yes because he couldnt possibly do without it that long so he must do it somewhere and the last time he came on my bottom when was it the night Boylan gave my hand a great squeeze going along by the Tolka in my hand there steals another I just pressed the back of his like that with my thumb to squeeze back singing the young May moon shes beaming love because he has an idea about him and me hes not such a fool he said Im dining out and going to the Gaiety though Im not going to give him the satisfaction in any case God knows hes a change in a way not to be always and ever wearing the same old hat unless I paid some nicelooking boy to do it since I cant do it myself a young boy would like me Id confuse him a little

…I love flowers Id love to have the whole place swimming in roses God of heaven theres nothing like nature the wild mountains then the

sea and the waves rushing then the beautiful country with the fields of oats and wheat and all kinds of things and all the fine cattle going about that would do your heart good to see rivers and lakes and flowers all sorts of shapes and smells and colours springing up even out of the ditches primroses and violets nature it is as for them saying theres no God I wouldnt give a snap of my two fingers for all their learning why dont they go and create something I often asked him atheists or whatever they call themselves go and wash the cobbles off themselves first then they go howling for the priest and they dying and why why because theyre afraid of hell on account of their bad conscience ah yes I know them well who was the first person in the universe before there was anybody that made it all who ah that they dont know neither do I so there you are they might as well try to stop the sun from rising tomorrow the sun shines for you he said the day we were lying among the rhododendrons on Howth head in the grey tweed suit and his straw hat the day I got him to propose to me yes first I gave him the bit of seedcake out of my mouth and it was leapyear like now yes 16 years ago my God after that long kiss I near lost my breath yes he said I was a flower of the mountain yes so we are flowers all a womans body yes that was one true thing he said in his life and the sun shines for you today yes that was why I liked him because I saw he understood or felt what a woman is and I knew I could always get round him and I gave him all the pleasure I could leading him on till he asked me to say yes and I wouldnt answer first only looked out over the sea and the sky I was thinking of so many things he didnt know of Mulvey and Mr Stanhope and Hester and father and old captain Groves and the sailors playing all birds fly and I say stoop and washing up dishes they called it on the pier and the sentry in front of the governors house with the thing round his white helmet poor devil half roasted and the Spanish girls laughing in their shawls and their tall combs and the auctions in the morning the Greeks and the jews and the Arabs and the devil knows who else from all the ends of Europe and Duke street and the fowl market all clucking outside Larby Sharons and the poor donkeys slipping half asleep and the vague fellows in the cloaks asleep in the shade on the steps and the big wheels of the carts of the bulls and the

old castle thousands of years old yes and those handsome Moors all in white and turbans like kings asking you to sit down in their little bit of a shop and Ronda with the old windows of the posadas 2 glancing eyes a lattice hid for her lover to kiss the iron and the wineshops half open at night and the castanets and the night we missed the boat at Algeciras the watchman going about serene with his lamp and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and the pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

…A cloud began to cover the sun slowly, shadowing the bay in deeper green. It lay behind him, a bowl of bitter waters. Fergus' song: I sang it alone in the house, holding down the long dark chords. Her door was open: She wanted to hear my music. Silent with awe and pity I went to her bedside. She was crying in her wretched bed. For those words, Stephen: love's bitter mystery.

Where now?

Her secrets: old feather fans, tasseled dancecards, powdered with musk, a gold of amber beads in her locked drawer. A birdcage hung in the sunny window of her house when she was a girl. She heard old Royce sing in the pantomime of Turko the terrible and laughed with others when he sang:

I am the boy

That can enjoy

Invisibly.

Phantasmal mirth, folded away: muskperfumed.

And no more turn aside and brood.

Folded away in the memory of nature with her toys…

In a dream, silently she had come to him, her wasted body within its loose graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rose wood, her breath bent over him with mute secret words, a faint odour of wetted ashes.

Her glazing eyes, staring out of death, to shake and bend my soul. On me alone. The ghostcandle to light her agony. Ghostly light on the tortured face. Her hoarse loud breath rattling in horror, while all prayed on their knees. Her eyes on me to strike me down. Litiata rutilantum te confessorum turma circumdet: iubilantium te virginum chorus excipiat.

Interpretation and analysis

Cultural and Historical Context

It is a generally accepted idea in literary studies that Joyce used Dublin as the artistic canvas for all his major writings, and each street name, political reference, or mention of different regions of Ireland holds a particular significance to what he is communicating.

Ireland

In 1914 when "Eveline" is written, Ireland won the Home Rule Act 1914. The Home Rule Act of 1914, also known as the (Irish) Third Home Rule Bill, and formally known as the Government of Ireland Act 1914 was a British Act of Parliament intended to provide self-government ("home rule") for Ireland within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Home Rule was suspended on the outbreak of World War I. In 1922, after the Irish War of Independence and the Anglo-Irish Treaty, the larger part of Ireland seceded from the United Kingdom (UK) to become the independent Irish Free State — and after 1948 the republic of Ireland.

Dublin

Dublin is the largest city and capital of Ireland with majority of catholic population. Joyce's most celebrated work, *Ulysses*, is set in Dublin and full of topical detail. *Dubliners* is a collection of short stories by Joyce about incidents and characters typical of residents of the city in the early part of the 20th century. Eveline is one of them. The time when the story was written Dublin suffers from bad social conditions and spiritually waste society.

Feminism

According to critics, Eveline, is largely affected by the feminist issues of the time period. They argue that feminist ideas are illustrated through Eveline's relationships with her family and boyfriend, as well the public expectations, and her duties and obligations.

Some critics argue that there would only be a replacement of the father with the husband but mastery would hardly change. Her refusal to leave is prompted by Feminine Desire.

Feminist theory

Feminist theory aims to understand the nature of gender inequality, promotes justice for women and seeks defense of women's rights and interests.

Suffrage

During the late 19th and early 20th century, the time when Eveline was written, this term took its origin from suffragist movement in Europe and the US. Suffragette derives from the word "suffrage," meaning the right to vote.

Narrative Modes in Eveline

Why does Joyce choose to tell the story from a third person perspective? Does he manage to inform the reader about Eveline's thoughts, impressions through third person narration?

Dialogue

What does the dialogue emphasize in the story? What does it inform the reader about Eveline's desire to leave home?

Stream of Consciousness Device: flashback

Try to remember which literary device flashback is and decide what it tells the readers about Eveline's desire to leave home.

What does the writer inform the reader through the flashback about Eveline's family or about Frank?

What is the purpose of flashback in films? What is its purpose

Setting

Where and when does the story take place? Does the author give hints about it?

Ulysses by James Joyce (a novel of nearly 600 pages) takes place on one day, namely eighteen hours and in one city – Dublin. The whole novel is told from the point of view of three characters.

In stream of consciousness writing past intermittently exists with the present.

Let us consider already quoted extract above, from most famous and most extended psycho-narration (as R. Humphrey names it – direct interior monologue) of a character (Molly Bloom) in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. The character's speech is not directed to another character. If we refer to the setting of this particular episode, we can find that there is nobody in the room, no auditor in the scene, except the character's (Molly Bloom's) husband, who is asleep.

Does the writer tell the time in "Eveline" from its chronological sequence? Does he show the movement of Eveline's consciousness into the future? How does he present Eveline's memories (or maybe memories within memories)?

As it is known, inner time in stream of consciousness novels flows independently of the clock time.

Does the inner time in Eveline contrast with temporal time? What effect does it make?

Plot in Stream of Consciousness Writing

R. Humphrey states that as Stream of consciousness literature mainly focuses on "psychic existence and functioning (internal man)," this results to reducing plot to minimum. However, the plot line may develop through the minds of the characters and through their impressions, reminiscences, and thoughts.

How does the plot develop in Eveline?

Can we analyze the story according to Freytagian categories? What about climax? When does it occur in the story?

Character

How is the title character portrayed? Joyce introduces the tendency for his characters to be frozen in a state of psychological and spiritual arrest, or "paralysis." When and under what circumstances is Eveline immobile ("paralyzed")?

What do the readers learn about Eveline's father? Find the passages in the story which show that Eveline's father hurt her feelings?

Do the readers see Frank through omniscient description or through Eveline's eyes?

Symbolism

Critics repeatedly state that Eveline is a highly symbolic story. Eveline is often seen as a spirit of Ireland. At the end of the story she is undecided and finally denies Frank. Does this have any symbolic meaning?

Identify other symbols in the story. What, in your opinion, dusting can symbolize?

Epiphany

When does the epiphany occur in the story? Which character experiences epiphany?

Epiphany is one of Joyce's stylistic trademarks. Why does he use this literary device in Eveline?

Dorothy Parker, an American writer, is famous for her refined hu-

mor and witty and malicious satire. Although she is mainly appreciated for short stories, she is also well-known as a writer of drama, poetry and criticism. Nearly all her short stories focus on her familiar dominant themes, such as frustrated love, loneliness, materialistic system of values, and disillusionment. "The Last Tea" was first published in 1932 and was, since, repeatedly included into numerous collections of short stories and anthologies.

THE LAST TEA

The young man in the chocolate-brown suit sat down at the table, where the girl with the artificial camellia had been sitting for forty minutes.

"Guess I must be late," he said. "Sorry you been waiting."

"Oh, goodness!" she said. "I just got here myself, just about a second ago. I simply went ahead and ordered because I was dying for a cup of tea. I was late, myself. I haven't been here more than a minute."

"That's good," he said. "Hey, hey, easy on the sugar — one lump is fair enough. And take away those cakes. Terrible! Do I feel terrible!"

"Ah," she said, "you do? Ah. Wha.dda matter?"

"Oh, I'm ruined," he said. "I'm in terrible shape."

"Ah, the poor boy," she said. "Was it feelin' mizzable? Ah, and it came way up here to meet me! You shouldn't have done that — I'd have understood. Ah, just think of it coming all the way up here when it's so sick!"

"Oh, that's all right," he said. "I might as well be here as any place else. Any place is like any other place, the way I feel today. Oh, I'm all shot."

"Why, that's just awful," she said. "Why, you poor sick thing. Goodness, I hope it isn't influenza. They say there's a lot of it around."

"Influenza!" he said. "I wish that was all I had. Oh, I'm poisoned. I'm through. I'm off the stuff for life. Know what time I got to bed? Twenty minutes past five, A. M., this morning. What a night! What an evening!"

"I thought," she said, "that you were going to stay at the office and work late. You said you'd be working every night this week."

"Yeah, I know," he said. "But it gave me the jumps, thinking about going down there and sitting at that desk. I went up to May's — she was throwing a party. Say, there was somebody there said they knew you."

"Honestly?" she said. "Man or woman?"

"Dame," he said. "Name's Carol McCall. Say, why haven't I been told about her before? That's what I call a girl. What a looker she is!"

"Oh, really?" she said. "That's funny — I never heard of anyone that thought that. I've heard people say she was sort of nice-looking, if she wouldn't make up so much. But I never heard of anyone that thought she was pretty."

"Pretty is right," he said. "What a couple of eyes she's got on her!"

"Really?" she said. "I never noticed them particularly. But I haven't seen her for a long time—sometimes people change, or something."

"She says she used to go to school with you," he said. "Well, we went to the same school," she said. "I simply happened to go to public school because it happened to be right near us, and Mother hated to have me crossing streets. But she was three or four classes ahead of me. She's ages older than I am."

"She's three or four classes ahead of them all," he said. "Dance! Can she step!

"Burn your clothes, baby,' I kept telling her. I must have been fried pretty."

"I was out dancing myself, last night," she said. "Wally Dillon and I. He's just been pestering me to go out with him. He's the most wonderful dancer. Goodness! I didn't get home till I don't know what time. I must look just simply a wreck. Don't I?"

"You look all right," he said.

"Wally's crazy," she said. "The things he says! For some crazy reason or other, he's got it into his head that I've got beautiful eyes, and, well, he just kept talking about them till I didn't know where to look, I was so embarrassed. I got so red, I thought everybody in the place would be looking at me. I got just as red as a brick. Beautiful eyes! Isn't he crazy?"

"He's all right," he said. "Say, this little McCall girl, she's had all kinds of offers to go into moving pictures. 'Why don't you go ahead and go?' I told her. But she says she doesn't feel like it."

"There was a man up at the lake, two summers ago," she said. "He was a director or something with one of the big moving-picture people — oh, he had all kinds of influence! — and he used to keep insisting and insisting that I ought to be in the movies. Said I ought to be doing sort of Garbo parts. I used to just laugh at him. Imagine!"

"She's had about a million offers," he said. "I told her to go ahead and go. She keeps getting these offers all the time."

"Oh, really?" she said. "Oh, listen, I knew I had something to ask you. Did you call me up last night, by any chance?"

"Me?" he said. "No, I didn't call you."

"While I was out, Mother said this man's voice kept calling up," she said. "I thought maybe it might be you, by some chance. I wonder who it could have been. Oh — I guess I know who it was. Yes, that's who it was!"

"No, I didn't call you," he said. "I couldn't have seen a telephone, last night. What a head I had on me, this morning! I called Carol up, around ten, and she said she was feeling great. Can that girl hold her liquor!"

"It's a funny thing about me," she said. "It just makes me feel sort of sick to see a girl drink. It's just something in me, I guess. I don't mind a man so much, but it makes me feel perfectly terrible to see a girl get intoxicated. It's just the way I am, I suppose."

"Does she carry it!" he said. "And then feels great the next day. There's a girl! Hey, what are you doing there? I don't want any more tea, thanks. I'm not one of these tea boys. And these tea rooms give

me the jumps. Look at all those old dames, will you? Enough to give you the jumps."

"Of course, if you'd rather be some place, drinking, with I don't know what kinds of people," she said, "I'm sure I don't see how I can help that. Goodness, there are enough people that are glad enough to take me to tea. I don't know how many people keep calling me up and pestering me to take me to tea. Plenty of people!"

"All right, all right, I'm here, aren't I?" he said. "Keep your hair on."

"I could name them all day," she said.

"All right," he said. "What's there to crab about?"

"Goodness, it isn't any of my business what you do," she said.

"But I hate to see you wasting your time with people that aren't nearly good enough for you. That's all."

"No need worrying over me," he said. "I'll be all right. Listen. You don't have to worry."

"It's just I don't like to see you wasting your time," she said, "staying up all night and then feeling terribly the next day. Ah, I was forgetting he was so sick. Ah, I was mean, wasn't I, scolding him when he was so mizzable. Poor boy. How's he feel now?"

"Oh, I'm all right," he said. "I feel fine. You want anything else? How about getting a check? I got to make a telephone call before six."

"Oh, really?" she said. "Calling up Carol?"

"She said she might be in around now," he said.

"Seeing her tonight?" she said.

"She's going to let me know when I call up," he said. "She's probably got about a million dates. Why?"

"I was just wondering," she said. "Goodness, I've got to fly! I'm having dinner with Wally, and he's so crazy, he's probably there now. He's called me up about a hundred times today."

"Wait till I pay the check," he said, "and I'll put you on a bus."

"Oh, don't bother," she said. "It's right at the corner. I've got to fly. I suppose you want to stay and call up your friend from here?"

"It's an idea," he said. "Sure you'll be all right?"

"Oh, sure," she said. Busily she gathered her gloves and purse, and left her chair.

He rose, not quite fully, as she stopped beside him.

"When'll I see you again?" she said.

"I'll call you up," he said. "I'm all tied up, down at the office and everything. Tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a ring."

"Honestly, I have more dates!" she said. "It's terrible. I don't know when I'll have a minute. But you call up, will you?"

"I'll do that," he said. "Take care of yourself."

"You take care of yourself," she said. "Hope you'll feel all right."

"Oh, I'm fine," he said. "Just beginning to come back to life."

"Be sure and let me know how you feel," she said. "Will you? Sure, now? Well, good-bye. Oh, have a good time tonight!"

"Thanks," he said. "Hope you have a good time, too."

"Oh, I wilt," she said, "I expect to. I've got to rush! Oh, I nearly forgot! Thanks ever so much for the tea. It was lovely."

"Be yourself, will you?" he said.

"It was," she said "Well. Now don't forget to call me up, will you? Sure? Well, good-by."

"Solong," he said.

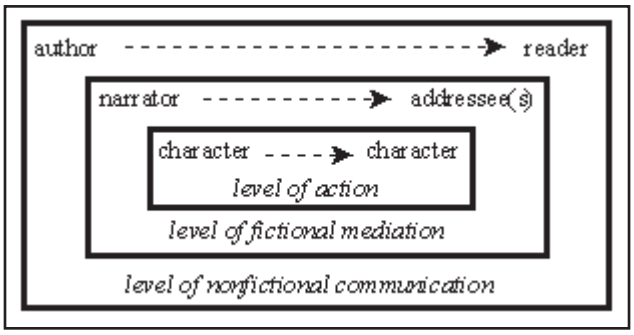
She walked on down the little line between the blue-painted tables.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Author's Discourse and Character's Discourse

In the main, a narrative text of a literary work can be subdivided into narrator's (author's) discourse and character's discourse.

One of the most famous narratologists, Manfred Jahn presents the following graphic of narrative communication. As shown in the following graphic, literary narrative communication involves the interplay of three communicative levels. Each level of communication comes with its own set of addressers (senders) and addressees (receivers).



According to M. Jahn, the above model distinguishes between the levels of:

1. Action, which comprises communicating characters. M.Jahn calls this level the "level of action" "because we are assuming that speech acts ([Austin 1962 [1955], Searle 1974 [1969] are not categorically different from other acts." [Jahn, 2005].

2. The second level presented by M.Jahn is the level of narrative mediation (or "narrative discourse"), where a fictional narrator refers to an addressee or narratee.

3. Nonfictional communication. On the level of nonfictional (or 'real') communication, the author and a reader of the text are situated on the same level of communication. Since author and reader do not communicate *in* the text itself, their level of communication is an "extratextual" one [Jahn, 2005].[141]

Thus, communicative contact is possible between:

1. Author and reader on the level of nonfictional (real) communication (extratextual level)

2.Narrator and audience or addressee(s) on the level of fictional mediation (intratextual level)

141. Jahn, Manfred. 2005. Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative. English Department, University of Cologne

3.Characters on the level of action (intratextual level).

Character Person Figure

Although the terms person, character and figure are often used indiscriminately, modern theoretical discourse makes an effort to be more distinct and accurate.

A **person** is a real-life person; anyone occupying a place on the level of nonfictional communication. Hence, authors and readers are persons.

A **character** is *not* a real-life person but only a "paper being" (Barthes 1975 [1966]), a being created by an author and existing only within a fictional text, either on the level of action or on the level of fictional mediation.

The term **figure** is often simply used as a variation of "character"; however, some theorists also use for referring to the narrator.[142]

Interpretation and Analysis

Explain the title of the text. Why is it called "The Last Tea?"

Implication

Implication is the suggestion that is not expressed directly but understood. The implication can also be suggested by the title.

Style

Style is the distinctive way in which an author uses language.

Word choice, phrasing, sentence length, tone, dialogue, purpose, and attitude toward the audience and subject can all contribute to an author's writing style.

142. Jahn, Manfred. 2005. Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative. English Department, University of Cologne.

What sort of language does Dorothy Parker use? Why does she use a lot of slang? Why does she use so many graphons?

What prevails in the story – dialogue or monologue?

Identify stylistic devices and their role in the description of the characters. What is the author's aim to use them?

Character

What does the two characters' speech reveal?

What methods does the author use to describe the characters (direct or explicit –indirect or implicit)?

How do their actions and doings characterize them?

What is the relationship between the characters and how is this relationship pointed out?

What contrasts and parallels are there in the behavior of the characters?

Character's Discourse

Why and in what cases does the girl use a number of emphatic exclamations – "Ah," "Oh," "Goodness," "why," and endearing phrases – "Ah, the poor boy," "you poor sick thing"? Why does the girl use the hyperbole "coming all the way up here;" the mock-baby talk, addressing him in the third person: "Ah, I was forgetting he was so sick. Ah, I was mean, wasn't I, scolding him when he was so mizzable. Poor boy. How's he feel now?"

How does the author manage to portray the character of a boy as unfeeling, selfish, boasting, and callous?

Theme

What is the theme of the story? In what way is it connected with the title of the story?

Can you recognize Dorothy Parker's dominant themes – frustrated love, loneliness, disillusionment?

Point of View

Who tells the story? Does it help to make it more effective?

Is Dorothy Parker successful in conveying the protagonist's feelings? Does she succeed in portraying the characters?

Tone

Tone is the author's attitude, stated or implied, toward a subject. Some possible attitudes are pessimism, optimism, earnestness, seriousness, bitterness, humor, and joy. An author's tone can be revealed through the choice of words and details.

What is the author's tone in the story?

Mood

Mood is the climate of feeling in a literary work. The choice of setting, objects, details, images, and words all contribute towards creating a specific mood. For example, an author may create a mood of mystery around a character or setting but may treat that character or setting in an ironic, serious, or humorous tone.

What is the mood of the story?

Can you identify the difference between the tone and the mood?

Guide to Understanding the Plot Development

Conflict

1. What is the conflict in this story? How does the writer present the inner conflict of the protagonist?

Exposition

2. What do you learn from the exposition or introduction of the story?

The young man in the chocolate-brown suit sat down at the table, where the girl with the artificial camellia had been sitting for forty minutes.

The introductory sentence-paragraph consists of 25 words only.

Infer

What does the verb tense (had been sitting) and the time indications inform the reader? Does the author want to suggest the disadvantage of the girl's position?

How does the relation between the characters of the boy and the girl become clear to the reader?

Does the author make any comments?

What information does the reader get from the character's utterance below?

"I just got here myself, just about a second ago… I haven't been here more than a minute."

Why do you think the girl lies so emphatically?

Does her lie come to clash with the opening phrase about 40 minutes wait?

Why does she repeat the lie second time?

Rising Action

What events are included in the rising action of the story?

In what way does the reference to the party and Carol McCall change the situation?

What language means does the writer employ to tell the readers that

utterances made by the characters are semantically disconnected?

What language devices does the author use when the character lies?

Identify yourself with the Character and draw conclusions

The character of a girl lies many times in the story. How would you behave if you were in a similar situation?

The girl is desperately trying to get the relationship back to the way it was.

What do you think their relationship was like in the past? Is it possible that it was any better than it is now?

Women usually tend to make excuses for the actions of their beloved. How does the author succeed in showing this in the story? Find examples in the text.

Climax

What is the climax of the story?

Falling Action

What events are included in the falling action of the story?

What language means does the author employ to show that the girl does not want to realize (or maybe she realizes but refuses to accept the truth) that the relationship has already died?

Identify yourself with the character and draw conclusions

The character of a girl still hopes that he will call her. Apparently she hopes that their relationship will change and his attitude towards her will change.

What do you think, the “changed” version is the “real” him or she fools herself into thinking he was someone else and their relationship was something different?

Have you ever been in a dying relationship when you are not willing to admit that it has ended? Can you understand what the female protagonist feels?

Interpret

How does the author express the contrasting attitudes towards the boy's and girl's relationship and their psychological and emotional disparity?

Dialogue

Most stories by Dorothy Parker are written in the form of dialogue. A very important place in "The Last Tea" is occupied by ***dialogue.*** Through it Dorothy Parker manages to eliminate herself from the narration. She neither explains nor makes comments, but rather through the dialogue, expresses the characters' minds. The characters while exchanging their remarks, discussing other people and their actions, expose themselves to the reader.

What is the role of dialogue in the story? The author appears in the narration only twice (at the beginning and at the end of the story) and interferes with the characters' dialogue only by her remarks – "he said," "she said."

Does Dorothy Parker employ dialogue in order to expose the inner selves of her characters? Does she succeed in doing this by eliminating herself from the narration?

Is Dorothy Parker's aim to depict the emotional state of her characters? Does she succeed in this by employing dialogue?

Bernard Malamud is considered as one of the great American Jewish writers of the 20th century. His parents were Russian immigrants who lived in New York and ran their own grocery store. Malamud began writing seriously when the Germans, led by Adolf Hitler, put six million Jewish people to death during World War II. In his novels The Natural (1952), The Assistant (1957), and The Fixer (1966), he describes urban Jewish life. The Magic Barrel, published in 1958, is regarded as one of his most popular stories, which won the National Book Award for fiction in 1959.

The Magic Barrel
Bernard Malamud

Not long ago there lived in uptown New York, in a small, almost **meager**[143] room, though crowded with books, Leo Finkle, a rabbinical student in the Yeshivah University.[144] Finkle, after six years of study, was to be **ordained**[145] in June and had been advised by an acquaintance that he might find it easier to win himself a **congregation**[146] if he were married. Since he had no present prospects of marriage, after two tormented days of turning it over in his mind, he called in Pinye Salzman, a marriage broker whose two-line advertisement he had read in the *Forward*.

The **matchmaker**[147] appeared one night out of the dark fourth-floor hallway of the graystone rooming house where Finkle lived, grasping a black, strapped portfolio that had been worn thin with use. Salzman, who had been long in the business, was of slight but digni-

143. poor
144. Jewish theological University in New York
145. authorized
146. A group of people who belong to a particular church
147. Marriage arranger

fied build, wearing an old hat, and an overcoat too short and tight for him. He smelled frankly of fish, which he loved to eat, and although he was missing a few teeth, his presence was not displeasing, because of an amiable manner curiously contrasted with mournful eyes. His voice, his lips, his wisp of beard, his **bony**[148] fingers were animated, but give him a moment of **repose**[149] and his mild blue eyes revealed a depth of sadness, a characteristic that put Leo a little at ease although the situation, for him, was inherently[150] tense.[151]

He at once informed Salzman why he had asked him to come, explaining that his home was in Cleveland, and that but for his parents, who had married comparatively late in life, he was alone in the world. He had for six years devoted himself almost entirely to his studies, as a result of which, understandably, he had found himself without time for a social life and the company of young women. Therefore he thought it the better part of trial and error – of embarrassing fumbling – to call in an experienced person to advise him on these matters. He remarked in passing that the function of the marriage broker was ancient and honorable, highly approved in the Jewish community, because it made practical the necessary without hindering joy. Moreover, his own parents had been brought together by a matchmaker. They had made, if not a financially profitable marriage – since neither had possessed any worldly goods to speak of – at least a successful one in the sense of their everlasting devotion to each other. Salzman listened in embarrassed surprise, sensing a sort of apology. Later, however, he experienced a glow of pride in his work, an emotion that had left him years ago, and he heartily approved of Finkle.

The two went to their business. Leo had led Salzman to the only clear place in the room, a table near a window that overlooked the lamp-lit city. He seated himself at the matchmaker's side but facing him, attempting by an act of will to suppress the unpleasant tickle in his throat. Salzman eagerly unstrapped his portfolio and removed a loose rubber band from a thin packet of much-handled cards. As he flipped through them, a gesture and sound that physically hurt Leo, the

148. Very thin (so that the bones can be seen)
149. rest
150. By nature
151. Worrying, awkward

student pretended not to see and gazed **steadfastly**[152] out the window. Although it was still February, winter was on its last legs, signs of which he had for the first time in years begun to notice. He now observed the round white moon, moving high in the sky through a cloud **menagerie**[153], and watched with half-open mouth as it penetrated a huge hen, and dropped out of her like an egg laying itself. Salzman, though pretending through eye-glasses he had just slipped on, to be engaged in scanning the writing on the cards, stole occasional glances at the young man's distinguished face, noting with pleasure the long, severe scholar's nose, brown eyes heavy with learning, sensitive yet ascetic lips, and a certain, almost hollow quality of the dark cheeks. He gazed around at shelves upon shelves of books and let out a soft, contented sigh.

When Leo's eyes fell upon the cards, he counted six spread out in Salzman's hand.

"So few?" he asked in disappointment.

"You wouldn't believe me how much cards I got in my office," Salzman replied.

"The drawers are already filled to the top, so I keep them now in a barrel, but is every girl good for a new rabbi?"

Leo blushed at this, regretting all he had revealed of himself in a curriculum vitae he had sent to Salzman. He had thought it best to acquaint him with his strict standards and specifications, but in having done so, felt he had told the marriage broker more than was absolutely necessary.

He hesitantly inquired, "Do you keep photographs of your clients on file?"

"First comes family, amount of dowry, also what kind of promises," Salzman replied, unbuttoning his tight coat and settling himself in the chair. "After comes pictures, rabbi."

"Call me Mr. Finkle. I'm not yet a rabbi."

Salzman said he would, but instead called him doctor, which he changed to rabbi when Leo was not listening too attentively

Salzman adjusted his horn-rimmed spectacles, gently cleared his throat and read in an eager voice the contents of the top card:

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152. continuously
153. collection

"Sophie P. Twenty-four years. Widow one year. No children. Educated high school and two years college. Father promises eight thousand dollars. Has wonderful wholesale business. Also real estate. On the mother's side comes teachers, also one actor. Well known on Second Avenue."

Leo gazed up in surprise. "Did you say a widow?"

"A widow don't mean spoiled, rabbi. She lived with her husband maybe four months. He was a sick boy she made a mistake to marry him."

"Marrying a widow has never entered my mind."

"This is because you have no experience. A widow, especially if she is young and healthy like this girl, is a wonderful person to marry. She will be thankful to you the rest of her life. Believe me, if I was looking now for a bride, I would marry a widow."

Leo reflected, then shook his head.

Salzman hunched his shoulders in an almost **imperceptible**[154] gesture of disappointment. He placed the card down on the wooden table and began to read another:

"Lily H. High school teacher. Regular. Not a substitute. Has savings and new Dodge car. Lived in Paris one year. Father is successful dentist thirty-five years. Interested in professional man. Well Americanized family. Wonderful opportunity."

"I knew her personally," said Salzman. "I wish you could see this girl. She is a doll. Also very intelligent. All day you could talk to her about books and theatre and what not. She also knows current events."

"I don't believe you mentioned her age?"

"Her age?" Salzman said, raising his brows. "Her age is thirty-two years."

"Leo said after a while, "I'm afraid that seems a little too old.

Salzman let out a laugh. "So how old are you, rabbi?"

"Twenty-seven."

"So what is the difference, tell me, between twenty-seven and thirty-two? My own wife is seven years older than me. So what did

154. Difficult to see or feel

I suffer? – Nothing. If **Rothschild's**[155] daughter wants to marry you, would you say on account her age, no?"

"Yes," Leo said dryly.

Salzman shook off the no in the eyes. "Five years don't mean a thing. I give you my word that when you will live with her for one week you will forget her age. What does it mean five years – that she lived more and knows more than somebody who is younger? On this girl, God bless her, years are not wasted. Each one that it comes makes better the bargain."

"What subject does she teach in high school?"

"Languages. If you heard the way she speaks French, you will think it is music. I am in the business twenty-five years, and I recommend her with my whole heart. Believe me, I know what I'm talking, rabbi."

"What's on the next card?" Leo said abruptly.

Salzman **reluctantly**[156] turned up the third card:

"Ruth K. Nineteen years. Honor student. Father offers thirteen thousand cash to the right bridegroom. He is a medical doctor. Stomach specialist with marvelous practice. Brother in law owns garment business. Particular people."

Salzman looked as if he had read his **trump card**[157].

"Did you say nineteen?" Leo asked with interest.

"On the dot."

"Is she attractive?" He blushed. "Pretty?"

Salzman kissed his finger tips. "A little doll. On this I give you my word. Let me call the father tonight and you will see what means pretty."

But Leo was troubled. "You're sure she's that young?"

"This I am positive. The father will show you the birth certificate."

"Are you positive there isn't something wrong with her?" Leo

155. Rothshild is a prominent family of European Jewish financiers
156. Unwillingly, unenthusiastically
157. Trump card beats somebody else's card; something that gives you advantage over other people

insisted.

"Who says there is wrong?"

"I don't understand why an American girl her age should go to a marriage broker."

A smile spread over Salzman's face.

"So for the same reason you went, she comes."

Leo flushed. "**I am pressed for time**."[158]

Salzman, realizing he had been tactless, quickly explained. "The father came, not her. He wants she should have the best, so he looks around himself. When we will locate the right boy he will introduce him and encourage. This makes a better marriage than if a young girl without experience takes for herself. I don't have to tell you this."

"But don't you think this young girl believes in love?" Leo spoke uneasily.

Salzman was about was about to **guffaw**[159] but caught himself and said soberly, "Love comes with the right person, not before."

Leo parted dry lips but did not speak. Noticing that Salzman had snatched a glance at the next card, he cleverly asked, "How is her health?"

"Perfect," Salzman said, breathing with difficulty. "Of course, she is a little lame on her right foot from an auto accident that it happened to her when she was twelve years, but nobody notices on account she is so brilliant and also beautiful."

Leo got up heavily and went to the window. He felt curiously bitter and upbraided himself for having called in the marriage broker. Finally, he shook his head.

"Why not?" Salzman persisted, the pitch of his voice rising.

"Because I detest stomach specialists."

"So what do you care what is his business? After you marry her do you need him? Who says he must come every Friday night in your house?"

Ashamed of the way the talk was going, Leo dismissed Salzman, who went home with heavy, melancholy eyes.

Though he had felt only relief at the marriage broker's depar-

158. I do not have much time; lacking time

159. Roll with laughter, laugh coarsely

ture, Leo was in low **spirits**[160] the next day. He explained it as rising from Salzman's failure to produce a suitable bride for him. He did not care for his type of **clientele**.[161] But when Leo found himself hesitating whether to seek out another matchmaker, one more polished than Pinye, he wondered if it could be – protestations to the contrary, and although he honored his father and mother – that he did not, in essence, care for the matchmaking institution? This thought he quickly put out of mind yet found himself still upset. All day he ran around the woods – missed an important appointment, forgot to give out his laundry, walked out of a Broadway cafeteria without paying and had to run back with the ticket in his hand; had even not recognized his landlady in the street when she passed with a friend and courteously called out, "A good evening to you, Doctor Finkle." By nightfall, however, he had regained sufficient calm to sink his nose into a book and there found peace from his thoughts.

Almost at once there came a knock on the door. Before Leo could say enter, Salzman, commercial cupid, was standing in the room. His face was gray and meager, his expression hungry, and he looked as if he would expire on his feet. Yet the marriage broker managed, by some trick of the muscles to display a broad smile.

"So good evening. I am invited?"

Leo nodded, disturbed to see him again, yet unwilling to ask the man to leave.

Beaming still, Salzman laid his portfolio on the table. "Rabbi, I got for you tonight good news."

"I've asked you not to call me rabbi. I'm still a student."

"Your worries are finished. I have for you a first-class bride."

"Leave me in peace concerning this subject." Leo pretended lack of interest.

"The world will dance at your wedding."

"Please, Mr. Salzman, no more."

"But first must come back my strength," Salzman said weakly. He fumbled with the portfolio straps and took out of the leather case an oily paper bag, from which he extracted a hard, seeded roll and a

160. In a bad mood
161. All the clients or customers

small, smoked white fish. With a quick emotion of his hand he stripped the fish out of its skin and began **ravenously**[162] to chew. "All day in a rush," he muttered.

Leo watched him eat.

"A sliced tomato you have maybe?" Salzman hesitantly inquired.

"No."

The marriage broker shut his eyes and ate. When he had finished he carefully cleaned up the crumbs and rolled up the remains of the fish, in the paper bag. His spectacled eyes roamed the room until he discovered, amid some piles of books, a one-burner gas stove. Lifting his hat he humbly asked, "A glass of tea you got, rabbi?"

Conscience-stricken,[163] Leo rose and brewed[164] the tea. He served it with a chunk[165] of lemon and two cubes of lump sugar, delighting Salzman.

After he had drunk his tea, Salzman's strength and good spirits were restored.

"So tell me rabbi," he said amiably, "you considered some more the three clients I mentioned yesterday?"

"There was no need to consider."

"Why not?"

"None of them suits me."

"What then suits you?"

Leo let it pass because he could give only a confused answe.

Without waiting for a reply, Salzman asked, "You remember this girl I talked to you – the high school teacher?"

"Age thirty-two?"

But surprisingly, Salzman's face lit in a smile. "Age twenty-nine."

Leo shot him a look. "Reduced from thirty-two?"

"A mistake," Salzman **avowed**.[166] "I talked today with the dentist. He took me to his safety deposit box and showed me the birth certifi-

162 greedily
163. Feeling guilty
164. Made hot tea
165. A large piece
166. Confirmed, promised

cate. She was twenty-nine years last August. They made her a party in the mountains where she went for her vacation. When her father spoke to me the first time I forgot to write the age and I told you thirty-two, but now I remember this was a different client, a widow."

"The same one you told me about? I thought she was twenty-four?"

"A different. Am I responsible that the world is filled with widows?"

"No, but I'm not interested in them, nor for that matter, in school teachers."

Salzman pulled his clasped hand to his breast. Looking at the ceiling he devoutly exclaimed, "Yiddishe kinder, what can I say to somebody that he is not interested in high school teachers? So what then you are interested?"

Leo flushed but controlled himself.

"In what else will you be interested," Salzman went on, "if you not interested in this fine girl that she speaks four languages and has personally in the bank ten thousand dollars? Also her father guarantees further twelve thousand. Also she has a new car, wonderful clothes, talks on all subjects, and she will give you a first-class home and children. How near do we come in our life to paradise?"

"If she's so wonderful, why wasn't she married ten years ago?"

"Why?" said Salzman with a heavy laugh. " – Why? Because she is partikiler. This is why. She wants the best."

Leo was silent, amused at how he had entangled himself. But Salzman had arouse his interest in Lily H., and he began seriously to consider calling on her. When the marriage broker observed how intently Leo's mind was at work on the facts he had supplied, he felt certain they would soon come to an agreement.

Late Saturday afternoon, conscious of Salzman, Leo Finkle walked with Lily Hirschorn along Riverside Drive. He walked briskly and erectly, wearing with distinction the black **fedora**[167] he had that morning taken with **trepidation**[168] out of the dusty hat box on his closet shelf, and the heavy black Saturday coat he had thoroughly whisked

167. Sun-hat

168. Fear, anxiety

clean. Leo also owned a walking stick, a present from a distant relative, but quickly put temptation aside and did not use it. Lily, petite and not unpretty, had on something signifying the approach of spring. She was au courant,[169] animatedly, with all sorts of subjects, and he weighed her words and found her surprisingly sound – score another for Salzman, whom he uneasily sensed to be somewhere around, hiding perhaps high in a tree along the street, flashing the lady signals with a pocket mirror; or perhaps a cloven-hoofed Pan, piping **nuptial**[170] **ditties**[171] as he danced his invisible way before them, strewing[172] wild buds on the walk and purple grapes in their path, symbolizing fruit of a union, though there was of course still none.

Lily startled Leo by remarking, "I was thinking of Mr. Salzman, a curious figure, wouldn't you say?"

Not certain what to answer, he nodded.

She bravely went on, blushing, "I for one am grateful for his introducing us. Aren't you?"

He courteously replied, "I am."

"I mean," she said with a little laugh – and it was all in good taste, to at least gave the effect of being not in bad – "do you mind that we came together so?"

He was not displeased with her honesty, recognizing that she meant to set the relationship aright, and understanding that it took a certain amount of experience in life, and courage, to want to do it quite that way. One had to have some sort of past to make that kind of beginning.

He said that he did not mind. Salzman's function was traditional and honorable – valuable for what it might achieve, which, he pointed out, was frequently nothing.

Lily agreed with a sigh. They walked on for a while and she said after a long silence, again with a nervous laugh, "Would you mind if I asked you something a little bit personal? Frankly, I find the subject fascinating." Although Leo shrugged, she went on half embarrassedly,

169. Fr. Well-informed
170. Wedding, marriage
171. songs
172. Covering the surface

"How was it that you came to your calling? I mean was it a sudden passionate inspiration?"

Leo, after a time, slowly replied, "I was always interested in the Law."

"You saw revealed in it the presence of the Highest?"

He nodded and changed the subject. "I understand that you spent a little time in Paris, Miss Hirschorn?"

"Oh, did Mr. Salzman tell you, Rabbi Finkle?" Leo winced[173] but she went on, "It was ages ago and almost forgotten. I remember I had to return for my sister's wedding."

And Lily would not be put off. "When," she asked in a trembly voice, "did you become enamored of God?"

He stared at her. Then it came to him that she was talking not about Leo Finkle, but of a total stranger, some mystical figure, perhaps even passionate prophet that Salzman had dreamed up for her – no relation to the living or dead. Leo trembled with rage and weakness. The trickster had obviously sold her a bill of goods,[174] just as he had him, who'd expected to become acquainted with a young lady of twenty-nine, only to behold, the moment he laid eyes upon her strained and anxious face, a woman past thirty-five and aging rapidly. Only his self control had kept him this long in her presence.

"I am not," he said gravely, "a talented religious person." and in seeking words to go on, found himself possessed by shame and fear. "I think," he said in a strained manner, "that I came to God not because I love Him, but because I did not."

This confession he spoke harshly because its unexpectedness shook him.

Lily wilted.[175] Leo saw a profusion[176] of loaves of bread go flying like ducks high over his head, not unlike the winged loaves by which he had counted himself to sleep last night. Mercifully,[177] then, it snowed, which he would not put past Salzman's machinations.

173. To make a sudden movement with your face as a result of pain, fear, surprise, etc.
174. Sl. Lied to her
175. Became lifeless
176. Large amount, abundance
177. Thank God; luckily

He was infuriated[178] with the marriage broker and swore he would throw him out of the room the minute he reappeared. But Salzman did not come that night, and when Leo's anger had subsided, an **unaccountable**[179] despair grew in its place. At first he thought this was caused by his disappointment in Lily, but before long it became evident that he had involved himself with Salzman without a true knowledge of his own intent. He gradually realized – with an emptiness that seized him with six hands – that he had called in the broker to find him a bride because he was incapable of doing it himself. This terrifying insight he had derived as a result of his meeting and conversation with Lily Hirschorn. Her probing questions had somehow irritated him into revealing – to himself more than her – the true nature of his relationship to God, and from that it had come upon him, with shocking force, that apart from his parents, he had never loved anyone. Or perhaps it went the other way, that he did not love God so well as he might, because he had not loved man. It seemed to Leo that his whole life stood starkly revealed and he saw himself for the first time as he truly was – unloved and loveless. This bitter but somehow not fully unexpected revelation brought him to a point to panic, controlled only by extraordinary effort. He covered his face with his hands and cried.

The week that followed was the worst of his life. He did not eat and lost weight. His beard darkened and grew ragged. He stopped attending seminars and almost never opened a book. He seriously considered leaving the Yeshiva, although he was deeply troubled at the thought of the loss of all his years of study – saw them like pages torn from a book, strewn over the city – and at the devastating effect of this decision upon his parents. But he had lived without knowledge of himself, and never in the Five Books and all the Commentaries – mea culpa[180] – had the truth been revealed to him. He did not know where to turn, and in all this desolating loneliness there was no to whom, although he often thought of Lily but not once could bring himself to go downstairs and make the call. He became touchy[181] and irritable, especially with his landlady, who asked him all manner of personal questions; on the other hand sensing his own disagreeable-

178. Enraged, very angry
179. inexplicable
180. Lat. My fault
181. Easily upset

ness, he **waylaid**[182] her on the stairs and apologized **abjectly**,[183] until **mortified**[184], she ran from him. Out of this, however, he drew the consolation[185] that he was a Jew and that a Jew suffered. But generally, as the long and terrible week drew to a close, he regained his composure and some idea of purpose in life to go on as planned. Although he was imperfect, the ideal was not. As for his quest of a bride, the thought of continuing afflicted him with anxiety and heartburn, yet perhaps with this new knowledge of himself he would be more successful than in the past. Perhaps love would now come to him and a bride to that love. And for this **sanctified**[186] seeking who needed a Salzman?

The marriage broker, a skeleton with haunted eyes, returned that very night. He looked, withal[187], the picture of frustrated expectancy – as if he had steadfastly waited the week at Miss Lily Hirschorn's side for a telephone call that never came.

Casually coughing, Salzman came immediately to the point: "So how did you like her?"

Leo's anger rose and he could not refrain from **chiding**[188] the matchmaker: "Why did you lie to me, Salzman?"

Salzman's pale face went dead white, the world had snowed on him.

"Did you not state that she was twenty-nine?' Leo insisted.

"I give you my word – "

"She was thirty-five, if a day. At least thirty-five."

"Of this don't be too sure. Her father told me – "

"Never mind. The worst of it was that you lied to her."

"How did I lie to her, tell me?"

"You told her things about me that weren't true. You made out to be more, consequently less than I am. She had in mind a totally different person, a sort of semimystical Wonder Rabbi."

"All I said, you was a religious man."

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182. To block somebody's way
183. Miserably, sorrowfully
184. Embarrassed, ashamed
185. Comfort, solace, relief
186. sacred
187. (Archaic) In addition
188. Reproaching, reprimanding

"I can imagine."

Salzman sighed. "This is my weakness that I have," he confessed. "My wife says to me I shouldn't be a salesman, but when I have two fine people that they would be wonderful to be married, I am so happy that I talk too much." He smiled wanly."[189] This is why Salzman is a poor man."

Leo's anger left him. "Well, Salzman, I'm afraid that's all."

The marriage broker fastened hungry eyes on him.

"You don't want any more a bride?"

"I do," said Leo, "but I have decided to seek her in a different way. I am no longer interested in an arranged marriage. To be frank, I now admit the necessity of premarital love. That is, I want to be in love with the one I marry."

"Love?" said Salzman, astounded. After a moment he remarked

"For us, our love is our life, not for the ladies. In the ghetto[190] they _ "

"I know, I know," said Leo. "I've thought of it often. Love, I have said to myself, should be a by-product[191] of living and worship rather than its own end. Yet for myself I find it necessary to establish the level of my need and fulfill it."

Salzman shrugged but answered, "Listen, rabbi, if you want love, this I can find for you also. I have such beautiful clients that you will love them the minute your eyes will see them."

Leo smiled unhappily. "I'm afraid you don't understand."

But Salzman hastily unstrapped his portfolio and withdrew a manila packet from it.

"Pictures," he said, quickly laying the envelope on the table.

Leo called after him to take the pictures away, but as if on the wings of the wind, Salzman had disappeared.

March came. Leo had returned to his regular routine. Although he felt not quite himself yet – lacked energy – he was making plans for a more active social life. Of course it would cost something, but he was

189. weakly
190. The area of a town where Jews were forced to live
191. result

an expert in cutting corners[192]; and when there were no corners left he would make circles rounder. All the while Salzman's pictures had lain on the table, gathering dust. Occasionally as Leo sat studying, or enjoying a cup of tea, his eyes fell on the manila[193] envelope, but he never opened it.

The days went by and no social life to speak of developed with a member of the opposite sex – it was difficult, given the circumstances of his situation. One morning Leo toiled up[194] the stairs to his room and stared out the window at the city. Although the day was bright his view of it was dark. For some time he watched the people in the street below hurrying along and then turned with a heavy heart to his little room. On the table was the packet. With a sudden relentless[195] gesture he tore it open. For a half-hour he stood by the table in a state of excitement, examining the photographs of the ladies Salzman had included. Finally, with a deep sigh he put them down. There were six, of varying degree of attractiveness, but look at them along enough and they all became Lily Hirschorn: all past their prime, all starved behind bright smiles, not a true personality in the lot. Life, despite their frantic yoohooings, had passed them by; they were pictures in a brief case that stank of fish. After a while, however, as Leo attempted to return the photographs into the envelope, he found in it another, a snapshot of the type taken by a machine for a quarter. He gazed at it a moment and let out a cry.

Her face deeply moved him. Why, he could at first not say. It gave him the impression of youth – spring flowers, yet age – a sense of having been used to the bone, wasted; this came from the eyes, which were hauntingly familiar, yet absolutely strange. He had a vivid impression that he had met her before, but try as he might he could not place her although he could almost recall her name, as he had read it in her own handwriting. No, this couldn't be; he would have remembered her. It was not, he affirmed, that she had an extraordinary beauty – no, though her face was attractive enough; it was that something about her moved him. Feature for feature, even some of the ladies of

192. Living economically
193. Strong brown paper
194. Climbed the stairs with difficulty
195. Persistent, unyielding

the photographs could do better; but she lapsed forth to this heart – had lived, or wanted to – more than just wanted, perhaps regretted how she had lived – had somehow deeply suffered: it could be seen in the depths of those reluctant eyes, and from the way the light enclosed and shone from her, and within her, opening realms of possibility: this was her own. Her he desired. His head ached and eyes narrowed with the intensity of his gazing, then as if an obscure fog had blown up in the mind, he experienced fear of her and was aware that he had received an impression, somehow, of evil. He shuddered, saying softly, it is thus with us all. Leo brewed some tea in a small pot and sat sipping it without sugar, to calm himself. But before he had finished drinking, again with excitement he examined the face and found it good: good for Leo Finkle. Only such a one could understand him and help him seek whatever he was seeking. She might, perhaps, love him. How she had happened to be among the discards[196] in Salzman's barrel he could never guess, but he knew he must urgently go find her.

Leo rushed downstairs, grabbed up the Bronx telephone book, and searched for Salzman's home address. He was not listed, nor was his office. Neither was he in the Manhattan book. But Leo remembered having written down the address on a slip of paper after he had read Salzman's advertisement in the "personals" column of the Forward. He ran up to his room and tore through his papers, without luck. It was exasperating. Just when he needed the matchmaker he was nowhere to be found. Fortunately Leo remembered to look in his wallet. There on a card he found his name written and a Bronx address. No phone number was listed, the reason – Leo now recalled – he had originally communicated with Salzman by letter. He got on his coat, put a hat on over his skull cap and hurried to the subway station. All the way to the far end of the Bronx he sat on the edge of his seat. He was more than once tempted to take out the picture and see if the girl's face was as he remembered it, but he refrained, allowing the snapshot to remain in his inside coat pocket, content to have her so close. When the train pulled into the station he was waiting at the door and bolted out. He quickly located the street Salzman had advertised.

The building he sought was less than a block from the subway, but

196. Leftovers, throw-outs, rubbish

it was not an office building, nor even a loft[197], nor a store in which one could rent office space. It was a very old tenement[198] house. Leo found Salzman's name in pencil on a soiled tag under the bell and climbed three dark flights to his apartment. When he knocked, the door was opened by a think, asthmatic, gray-haired woman in felt slippers.

"Yes?" she said, expecting nothing. She listened without listening. He could have sworn he had seen her, too, before but knew it was an illusion.

"Salzman – does he live here? Pinye Salzman," he said, "the matchmaker?"

She stared at him a long minute. "Of course."

He felt embarrassed. "Is he in?"

"No." Her mouth, thought left open, offered nothing more.

"The matter is urgent. Can you tell me where his office is?"

"In the air." She pointed upward.

"You mean he has no office?" Leo asked.

"In his socks."

He peered into the apartment. It was sunless and dingy[199], one large room divided by a half-open curtain, beyond which he could see a sagging[200] metal bed. The near side of the room was crowded with rickety chairs, old bureaus, a three-legged table, racks of cooking utensils, and all the apparatus of a kitchen. But there was no sign of Salzman or his magic barrel, probably also a figment[201] of the imagination. An odor of frying fish made weak to the knees.

"Where is he?" he insisted. "I've got to see your husband."

At length she answered, "So who knows where he is? Every time he thinks a new thought he runs to a different place. Go home, he will find you."

"Tell him Leo Finkle."

She gave no sign she had heard.

He walked downstairs, depressed.

But Salzman, breathless, stood waiting at his door.

197. attic
198. dwelling
199. Dirty, soiled
200. drooping
201. Illusion, hallucination

Leo was astounded and overjoyed. “How did you get here before me?”

“I rushed.”

“Come inside.”

They entered. Leo fixed tea, and a sardine sandwich for Salzman. As they were drinking he reached behind him for the packet of pictures and handed them to the marriage broker.

Salzman put down his glass and said expectantly, “You found somebody you like?”

“Not among these.”

The marriage broker turned away.

“Here is the one I want.” Leo held forth the snapshot.

Salzman slipped on his glasses and took the picture into his trembling hand. He turned ghastly and let out a groan.

“What’s the matter?” cried Leo.

“Excuse me. Was an accident this picture. She isn’t for you?” Salzman frantically shoved the manila packet into his portfolio. He thrust the snapshot into his pocket and fled down the stairs.

Leo, after momentary paralysis, gave chase and cornered the marriage broker in the vestibule. The landlady made hysterical outcries but neither of them listened.

“Give me back the picture, Salzman.”

“No.” The pain in his eyes was terrible.

“Tell me who she is then.”

“This I can’t tell you. Excuse me.”

He made to depart, but Leo, forgetting himself, seized the matchmaker by his tight coat and shook him frenziedly.

“Please,” sighed Salzman. “Please.”

Leo ashamedly let him go. “Tell me who she is,” he begged. “It’s very important to me to know.”

“She is not for you. She is a wild one – wild, without shame. This is not a bride for a rabbi.”

“What do you mean wild?”

“Like an animal. Like a dog. For her to be poor was a sin. This is why to me she is dead now.”

“In God’s name, what do you mean?”

"Her I can't introduce to you," Salzman cried.

"Why are you so excited?"

"Why, he asks," Salzman said, bursting into tear. "This is my baby, my Stella, she should burn in hell."

Leo hurried up to bed and hid under the covers. Under the covers he thought his life through. Although he soon fell asleep he could not sleep her out of his mind. He woke, beating his breast. Though he prayed to be rid of her, his prayers went unanswered. Through days of torment he endlessly struggled not to love her; fearing success, he escaped it. He then concluded to convert her to goodness, himself to God. The idea alternately nauseated and exalted him.

He perhaps did not know that he had come to a final decision until he encountered Salzman in a Broadway cafeteria. He was sitting alone at a rear table, sucking the bony remains of a fish. The marriage broker appeared haggard[202] and transparent to the point of vanishing.

Salzman looked up at first without recognizing him. Leo had grown a pointed beard and his eyes were weighted with wisdom.

"Salzman," he said, "love has at last come to my heart."

"Who can love from a picture?" mocked the marriage broker.

"It is not impossible."

"If you can love her, then you can love anybody. Let me show you some new clients that they just sent me their photographs. One is a little doll."

"Just her I want," Leo murmured.

"Don't be a fool, doctor. Don't bother with her."

"Put me in touch with her, Salzman," Leo said humbly.

"Perhaps I can be of service."

Salzman had stopped eating and Leo understood with emotion that it was now arranged.

Leaving the cafeteria, he was, however, afflict[203] by a tormenting suspicion that Salzman had planned it all to happen this way.

Leo was informed by better that she would meet him on a certain corner, and she was there one spring night, waiting under a street lamp. He appeared carrying a small bouquet of violets and rosebuds. Stella stood by the lamp post, smoking. She wore white with red shoes,

202. Very tired, exhausted
203. Troubled, worried

which fitted his expectations, although in a troubled moment he had imagined the dress red, and only the shoes white. She waited uneasily and shyly. From afar he saw that her eyes – clearly her father's – were filled with desperate innocence. He pictured, in her, his own redemption.[204] Violins and lit candles revolved in the sky. Leo ran forward with flowers out-thrust.

Around the corner, Salzman, leaning against a wall, chanted prayers for the dead.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Interpretation is a Latin word and it means "explanation," "definition." Every interpretation presupposes understanding. To understand is, in general, to grasp something ("I get it"), to see things clearer (say, when an obscure or ambiguous passage becomes clear), to be able to integrate a particular meaning into a larger frame. Paul Ricoeur notes the way interpretation moves forward from naive understanding, where the interpreter has a superficial grasp of the whole of the text, to deeper understanding, where the interpreter understands the parts of the text in relation to the whole and the whole of the text in relation to its parts (the hermeneutic circle).[205]

OVERINTERPRETATION

Umberto Eco[206] views some readings as overinterpretations. According to him, overinterpretation may be due to overestimating the importance of the indices, which results from a propensity to consider the most obvious elements as significant. Eco rejects the relevance of consulting the empirical author in order to discover his or her intention. "When a text is produced not for a single addressee but for a community of readers – the author knows that he or she will be interpreted

204. salvation

205. Ricouer, Paul, The Conflicts of Interpretation: Essays in Hermeuneutics, Northwestern University Press, 1974.

206. Umberto Eco is 20th / 21st century outstanding Italian semiotician, philosopher, literary critic and novelist.

not according to his or her intentions but according to a complex strategy of interactions which also involve the readers, along with their competence in language as a social treasury" [Eco, 1992 : 67].[207]

Story and Plot

"Sjuzet" and "Fabula"

Story is a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence.

A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality.

...If it is in a story we say "and then?" If it is in a plot we ask "why?" That is the fundamental difference between these two aspects [Forster, 1927: 86].[208]

The Russian formalists, too, made the distinction, but used only two terms: the "fable" (fabula), or basic story stuff, the sum total of events to be related in the narrative, and, on the other hand, the "plot" (sjuzet). The story is actually told by linking the events together. To formalists, fable is "the set of events tied together which are communicated to us in the course of the work," or "what has in effect happened"; plot is "how the reader becomes aware of what happened" [Chatman, 1978 : 19,20].[209]

Science Link

Religion and Culture

Marriage

207. Eco, Umberto, Interpretation and Overinterpretation, Cambridge University Press, 1992.
208. Forster, E.M., aspects of the Novel, New York, 1927.
209. Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Ficiton and Film* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978

In Jewish tradition, the joining of a man and woman in marriage is known as *kiddushin*, from the root *kadash*, or holy. It is through this

tion
And,
s or-

By Shlomo Yaffe

Arranged marriage was the dominant model throughout the traditional Jewish world right up to modernity – and it continues to be the approved model even today.

1. Find in Old Testament how Abraham and Isaac got married.

2. Find in Old Testament Jacob's long delayed marriage with Rachel.

In your opinion, does Judaism believe in the love-match?

Generally, in traditional Judaism arranged marriages are "arranged" by parents, often with the help of matchmakers – "marriage brokers" as Bernard Malamud calls them. *The shadchan* ("matchmaker") has always played a major role in Jewish marriages.

The people who arranged marriages – the shadchanim – were esteemed members of the community, often Rabbis, who saw it as an important part of their communal responsibilities. Over time, however, the arranging of marriages fell to a much lower stratum in the Jewish community and professional shadchanim emerged for whom this provided a living. At this time, the matchmaker became as a kind of a businessman who would do anything to close a deal and to earn his commission.

In The Magic Barrel the writer informs the reader about arranged marriages through the character: "*He remarked in passing that the function of the marriage broker was ancient and honorable, highly approved in the Jewish community, because it made practical the necessary without hindering joy. Moreover, his own parents had been brought together by a matchmaker. They had made, if not a financially profitable marriage – since neither had possessed any worldly goods to speak of – at least a successful one in the sense of their everlasting devotion to each other."*

Interpret and Discuss

How do different cultures understand love and marriage? What is Orthodox Christian understanding of love and marriage?

Interpretation and analysis

Genre and Style

According to critics "The Magic Barrel" clearly demonstrates Malamud's style of writing. He coloured the story with the language and the manners of the Jewish ghetto. But in spite of the fact that Bernard

Malamud introduces Jewish traditions and rituals and develops Jewish characters, the story is not limited with Jewish problems; Malamud once said in an interview with Daniel Stern, "I write for all men."

Many literary scholars argue that the story is written in a fairy tale style: "*Not long ago there lived in uptown New York, in a small, almost meager room, though crowded with books, Leo Finkle, a rabbinical student in the Yeshivah University."*

The story combines the elements of fantasy and reality.

FANTASY contains: elements that are not realistic; magical powers and sometimes involving mythical beings.

REALISTIC FICTION contains: stories that take place in modern times; characters involved in events that could happen.

Why, do you think, the story is titled "The Magic Barrel"?

Do you think that Salzman – the matchmaker possesses supernatural power?

Point of View

From whose point of view is the story told?

The point of view in Malamud's "The Magic Barrel" is considered to be third person limited. What makes you agree with this statement?

Are the events viewed from one character or different characters?

Is the narrator the character of the story?

Is the narrator "omniscient" and "omnipotent"?

Through which character does the narrator view the events?

Symbolism

When the story begins it is February, "winter was on its last legs."

At the end of the story it is spring – *"she was there one spring night, waiting under a street lamp. He appeared carrying a small bou-*

quet of violets and rosebuds."

Do the seasons symbolize anything?

"Stella stood by the lamp post, smoking. She wore white with red shoes, which fitted his expectations, although in a troubled moment he had imagined the dress red, and only the shoes white."

Do the following symbols – Stella's name (star), her dress (white for purity), and shoes (red for passion) stand for something larger? Do they serve as concept making means in the story? In what way are the symbols connected with the main idea of the story?

Critics argue that when at the end of the story Salzman says *Kaddish,* the traditional Jewish prayer for the dead, he is commemorating the death of the old Leo who was incapable of love. But he is also celebrating Leo's birth into a new life.

What, in your opinion, does Salzman's prayer for the dead symbolize in the story?

Characters

Critics note that using just a few strokes Bernard Malamud manages to create compelling and complex characters.

Does this show in "The Magic Barrel"?

Find the passages describing Pinye Salzman, the matchmaker. This character has been the subject of analysis by many critics. They claim that he has a mysterious and magical power.

What literary and language means did the writer employ to lead critics or readers to such kind understanding of the character?

Interpret

"*Can you tell me where his office is?"*

"In the air". She pointed upward….

How can you interpret "in the air"?

"*As if on the wings of the wind, Salzman had disappeared"*

Is Salzman really a supernatural creature?

Leo pictures the matchmaker as “cloven-hoofed Pan.” This name originates within the Greek language, from the word *paein*, meaning “to pasture.” It is connected to fertility and the season of spring.

How does the author characterize Leo Finckle?

In your opinion, when does the character experience epiphany?

Why does he return home in despair after the conversation with Lily?

What did Lily made Leo realize?

Interpret

He seriously considered leaving the Yeshiva, although he was deeply troubled at the thought of the loss of all his years of study – saw them like pages torn from a book, strewn over the city – and at the devastating effect of this decision upon his parents. He seriously considered leaving the Yeshiva, although he was deeply troubled at the thought of the loss of all his years of study – saw them like pages torn from a book, strewn over the city – and at the devastating effect of this decision upon his parents.

Why does the character compare his years of study to pages torn from a book?

What state of mind of the character is achieved through this language device?

Interpret

He did not know where to turn, and in all this desolating loneliness there was no to whom... He became touchy and irritable, especially with his landlady, who asked him all manner of personal questions; on the other hand sensing his own disagreeableness, he waylaid her on the stairs and apologized abjectly, until mortified, she ran from him. Out of this, however, he drew the consolation that he was a Jew and that a Jew suffered.

Don’t you think that it the natural state of a person who does not love God and man, who is “*unloved and loveless”?*

Identify yourself with the character and draw conclusions

Have you reflected upon why you become touchy and irritable? What can be the source of your desolating loneliness – when you don't know where to turn? How do you console yourself – you are a Christian and a Christian should suffer, or you confess that you lack love – you love neither God nor man? Do you claim that you love everybody; you are kind and just to all? Have you ever realized that in fact you are spiritually empty, unloved and loveless?

Interpret

Read the passage carefully and consider how the two men understand and interpret love.

" I am no longer interested in an arranged marriage. To be frank, I now admit the necessity of premarital love. That is, I want to be in love with the one I marry."

"Love?" said Salzman, astounded. After a moment he remarked "For us, our love is our life, not for the ladies. In the ghetto they – "

"I know, I know," said Leo. "I've thought of it often. Love, I have said to myself, should be a by-product[210] of living and worship rather than its own end. Yet for myself I find it necessary to establish the level of my need and fulfill it."

Salzman shrugged but answered, "Listen, rabbi, if you want love, this I can find for you also. I have such beautiful clients that you will love them the minute your eyes will see them."

Leo smiled unhappily. "I'm afraid you don't understand."

Interpret

How can you explain the fact that only after Leo's declaration that he was not interested in arranged marriages Salzman withdrew a

210. result

manila packet of girls' pictures?

"All the while Salzman's pictures had lain on the table, gathering dust. Occasionally as Leo sat studying, or enjoying a cup of tea, his eyes fell on the manila envelope, but he never opened it."

Why did not he open the envelope?

Why, in your opinion**,** Leo Finkle was afflicted by a "tormenting suspicion that Salzman had planned it all to happen this way"?

Why did Leo react so unfavorably and even painfully to the three marriage prospects? Why did not he like Sophie? Ruth? Lily? Why was meeting with Lily so painful to him?

Interpret

What do we learn about Stella? In your opinion, why does her father say that "she should burn in hell"? Why does he say that she is "wild, without shame"? Why does he say – "to me she is dead now"?

Interpret

He then concluded to convert her to goodness, himself to God. The idea alternately nauseated and exalted him.

Explain the conflict Leo is experiencing. What causes the duality of his state of mind?

Interpret

Leo had grown a pointed beard and his eyes were weighted with wisdom.

How did Leo achieve the state of wisdom? What did he go through?

Understanding Plot Development

Exposition

The story opens with words "Long ago there lived…"

Remember the stories with the beginning of the kind. What kind of the stories are they? Do you think that these words give hints what might occur in the story? What is foreshadowed in the story?

Climax

What is the climax of the story?

Do you think that in the passage below, Leo is experiencing epiphany? Can it coincide with the climax of the story?

"I think," he said in a strained manner, "that I came to God not because I love Him, but because I did not."

Now consider carefully the following passage and try to name the two most important truths Leo realizes about himself.

"He gradually realized – with an emptiness that seized him with six hands – that he had called in the broker to find him a bride because he was incapable of doing it himself. This terrifying insight he had derived as a result of his meeting and conversation with Lily Hirschorn. Her probing questions had somehow irritated him into revealing – to himself more than her – the true nature of his relationship to God, and from that it had come upon him, with shocking force, that apart from his parents, he had never loved anyone. Or perhaps it went the other way, that he did not love God so well as he might, because he had not loved man. It seemed to Leo that his whole life stood starkly revealed and he saw himself for the first time as he truly was – unloved and loveless."

Resolution

The story has an ambiguous ending: critics argue that Salzman's prayers either signify Finkle's abandonment of the Jewish faith or celebrate the death of his old self and the beginning of his new life.

Theme and Message

Do you think that the theme of the story is Jewish tradition of marriage?

Can love be one of the themes of the story? If so, pay attention to different understanding of love by two major characters – Salzman and Leo Finckle. What can the author's message to the reader about love and what literary and language means does he employ to impart his message?

Another major theme of the story might be self-discovery through much torment.

What has the character suffered through to "discover" himself?

How did he realize that he did not love God?

Critics note that the story focuses on the theme of Jewish identity.

Interpret

Critics repeatedly claim that "The Magic Barrel" has generated a wide array of interpretations. Give as many interpretations as possible, but try to avoid overinterpretation.

Samuel Barclay Beckett, an Irish writer, a dramatist and a poet, acknowledged as one of the last modernists and one of the first postmodernists, is one of the most influential writers of the 20th century. He is commonly associated with the Theatre of the Absurd.

Krapp's Last Tape

A late evening in the future.

Krapp's den.

Front centre a small table, the two drawers of which open towards audience.

Sitting at the table, facing front, i.e. across from the drawers, a **wearish**[211] old man: Krapp

Rusty black narrow trousers too short for him. Rust black sleeveless waistcoat, four capaciou pockets. Heavy silver watch and chain. **Grimy**[212] white shirt open at neck, no collar. Surprising pair of dirty white boots, size ten at least, very narrow and pointed.

White face. Purple nose. Disordered grey hair. Unshaven.

very near-sighted (but unspectacled). Hard of hearing.

Cracked[213] voice. Distinctive intonation.

Laborious walk.

On the table a tape-recorder with microphone and a number of cardboard boxes containing **reels**[214] of recorded tapes.

table and immediately **adjacent**[215] area in strong white light. Rest of stage in darkness.

Krapp remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, looks at his watch, fumbles in his pockets, takes out an envelope, puts it back, fumbles, takes out a small bunch of keys, raises it to his eyes, chooses a key, gets up and moves to front of table. He stoops, unlocks first drawer, peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a reel of tape, peers at it, puts it back, locks drawer, unlocks second drawer peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a large banana, peers at it, locks

211. Tired out, exhausted
212. Dirty, filthy
213. Broken, fractured
214. rolls
215. neighbouring

drawer, puts keys back in his pocket. He turns, advances to edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, drops skin at his feet, puts end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring **vacuously**[216] before him. Finally he bites off the end, turns aside and begins pacing to and fro at edge of stage, in the light, i.e. not more than four or five paces either way, meditatively eating banana. He treads[217] on skin, slips, nearly falls, recovers himself, stoops and peers at skin and finally pushes it, still stooping, with his foot over the edge of the stage into pit. He resumes his pacing, finishes banana, returns to table, sits down, remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, takes keys from his pockets, raises them to his eyes, chooses key, gets up and moves to front of table, unlocks second drawer, takes out a second large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts back his keys in his pocket, turns, advances to the edge of stage, **halts**,[218] strokes banana, peels it, tosses skin into pit, puts an end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he has an idea, puts banana in his waistcoat pocket, the end emerging, and goes with all the speed he can muster backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Loud pop of cork. Fifteen seconds. He comes back into light carrying an old ledger and sits down at table. He lays ledger on table, wipes his mouth, wipes his hands on the front of his waistcoat, brings them smartly together and rubs them.

KRAPP

(briskly). Ah! (He bends over ledger, turns the pages, finds the entry he wants, reads.) Box . . . thrree . . . spool . . . five. (he raises his head and stares front. With relish.) Spool! (pause.) Spooool! (happy smile. Pause. He bends over table, starts peering and poking at the boxes.) Box . . . thrree . . . three . . . four . . . two . . . (with surprise) nine! good God! . . . seven . . . ah! the little rascal! (He takes up the box, peers at it.) Box thrree. (He lays it on table, opens it and peers at spools inside.) Spool . . . (he peers at the ledger) . . . five . . . (he peers at spools) . . . five . . . five . . . ah! the little scoundrel! (He takes out a

216. Blankly, stupidly
217. crashes
218. stops

spool,[219] peers at it.) Spool five. (He lays it on table, closes box three, puts it back with the others, takes up the spool.) Box three, spool five. (He bends over the machine, looks up. With relish.) Spooool! (happy smile. He bends, loads spool on machine, rubs his hands.) Ah! (He peers at **ledger**,[220] reads entry at foot of page.) Mother at rest at last . . . Hm . . . The black ball . . . (He raises his head, stares blankly front. Puzzled.) Black ball? . . . (He peers again at ledger, reads.) The dark nurse . . . (He raises his head, broods, peers again at ledger, reads.) Slight improvement in bowel condition . . . Hm . . . Memorable . . . what? (He peers closer.) Equinox, memorable equinox. (He raises his head, stares blankly front. Puzzled.) Memorable equinox? . . . (Pause. He shrugs his head shoulders, peers again at ledger, reads.) Farewell to – (he turns the page) – love.

He raises his head, broods, bends over machine, switches on and assumes listening posture, i.e. leaning forward, elbows on table, hand **cupping**[221] ear towards machine, face front.

TAPE

(strong voice, rather pompous, clearly Krapp's at a much earlier time.) Thirty-nine today, sound as a – (Settling himself more comfortable he knocks one of the boxes off the table, curses, switches off, sweeps boxes and ledger violently to the ground, winds tape back to the beginning, switches on, resumes posture.) Thirty-nine today, sound as a bell, apart from my old weakness, and intellectually I have now every reason to suspect at the . . . (hesitates) . . . crest of the wave – or thereabouts. Celebrated the awful occasion, as in recent years, quietly at the winehouse. Not a soul. Sat before the fire with closed eyes, separation the grain from the husks. jotted down a few notes, on the back on an envelope. Good to be back in my den in my old rags. Have just eaten I regret to say three bananas and only with difficulty restrained a fourth. Fatal things for a man with my condition. (Vehemently.) Cut 'em out! (pause.) The new light above my table is a great improvement. With all this darkness around me I feel less alone. (Pause.) In a

219. reel
220. A book in which one records the money paid or recieved
221. Hands into a round shape

way. (Pause.) I love to get up and move about in it, then back here to . . . (hesitates) . . . me. (pause.) Krapp.

Pause.

The grain, now what I wonder do I mean by that, I mean . . . (hesitates) . . . I suppose I mean those things worth having when all the dust has – when all my dust has settled. I close my eyes and try and imagine them.

Pause. Krapp closes his eyes briefly.

Extraordinary silence this evening, I strain my ears and do not hear a sound. Old Miss McGlome always sings at this hour. But not tonight. Songs of her girlhood, she says. Hard to think of her as a girl. Wonderful woman, though. Connaught, I fancy. (Pause.) Shall I sing when I am her age, if I ever am? No. (Pause.) Did I sing as a boy? No. (Pause.) Did I ever sing? No.

Pause.

Just been listening to an old year, passages at random. I did not check in the book, but it must be at least ten or twelve years ago. At that time I think I was still living on and off with Bianca in Kedar Street. Well out of that, Jesus yes! Hopeless business. (Pause.) Not much about her, apart from a tribute to her eyes. Very warm. I suddenly was them again. (Pause.) Incomparable! (Pause.) Ah well . . . (Pause.) These old P.M.s are gruesome, but I often find them – (Krapp switches off, broods, switches on) – a help before embarking on a new . . . (hesitates) . . . retrospect. Hard to believe I was ever that young whelp. The voice! Jesus! And the aspirations! (Brief laugh in which Krapp joins.) And the resolutions! (Brief laugh in which Krapp joins.) To drink less, in particular. (Brief laugh of Krapp alone.) Statistics. Seventeen hundred hours, out of the preceding eight thousand odd, consumed on licensed premises alone. More than 20%, say 40% of his waking life. (Pause.) Plans for a less . . . (hesitates) . . . engrossing sexual life. Last illness of his father. Flagging pursuit of happiness. Unattainable laxation. Sneers at what he calls his youth and thanks to God that it's over. (Pause.) False ring there. (Pause.) Shadows of the opus . . . magnum. Closing with a – (brief laugh) – yelp to Providence. (Prolonged laugh in which Krapp joins.) What remains of all that misery? A girl in a shabby green coat, on a railway-station platform? No?

Pause.

When I look –

Krapp switches off, broods, looks at his watch, gets up, goes backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. pop of cork. Ten seconds. Second cork. Ten seconds. Third cork. Ten seconds. Brief burst of quavering song.

KRAPP

(sings).

Now the day is over,

Night is drawing nigh-igh,

Shadows –Fit of coughing. He comes back into light, sits down, wipes his mouth, switches on, resumes his listening posture.

TAPE

- Back on the year that is gone, with what I hope is perhaps a glint of the old eye to come, there is of course the house on the canal where mother lay dying, in the late autumn, after her long **viduity** (Krapp gives a start), and the – (Krapp switches off, winds back tape a little, bends his ear closer to the machine, switches on) – a-dying, after her long viduity, and the –

Krapp switches off, raises his head, stares blankly before him. His lips move in the syllables of "viduity." No sound. He gets up, goes back stage into darkness, comes back with an enormous dictionary, lays it on table, sits down and looks up the word. viduity

KRAPP

(reading from dictionary). State – or condition of being – or remaining – a widow – or widower. (Looks up. Puzzled.) Being – or remaining? . . . (Pause. He peers again at dictionary. Reading.) "Deep weeds of viduity" . . . Also of an animal, especially a bird . . . the vidua or weaver bird . . . Black plumage of male . . . (He looks up. With relish.) The vidua0bird!

Pause. He closes dictionary, switches on, resumes listening posture.

TAPE

- bench by the **weir**[222] from where I could see her window. There I sat, in the biting wind, wishing she were gone. (Pause.) Hardly a soul, just a few regulars, nursemaids, infants, old men, dogs. I got to know them quite well – oh by appearance of course I mean! One dark young beauty I recall particularly, all white and starch, **incomparable**[223] bosom, with a big black hooded **perambulator**, most **funereal**[224] thing. Whenever I looked in her direction she had her eyes on me. And yet when I was bold enough to speak to her – not having been introduced – she threatened to call a policeman. As if I had designs on her virtue! (Laugh. Pause.) The face she had! The eyes! Like . . . (hesitates) . . . chrysolite! (Pause.) Ah well . . . (Pause.) I was there when – (Krapp switches off, broods, switches on again) – the blind went down, one of those dirty brown roller affairs, throwing a ball for a little white dog, as chance would have it. I happened to look up and there it was. All over and done with, at last. I sat on for a few moments with the ball in my hand and the dog yelping and pawing at me. (Pause.) Moments. Her moments, my moments. (Pause.) The dog's moments. (Pause.) In the end I held it out to him and he took it in his mouth, gently, gently. A small, old, black, hard, solid rubber ball. (Pause.) I shall feel it, in my hand, until my dying day. (Pause.) I might have kept it. (Pause.) But I gave it to the dog.

Pause.

Ah well . . .

Pause.

Spiritually a year of profound gloom and indulgence until that memorable night in March at the end of the **jetty**,[225] in the howling wind, never to be forgotten, when suddenly I saw the whole thing. The vision, at last. This fancy is what I have cheifly to record this evening, againt the day when my work will be done and perhaps no place left in my memory, warm or cold, for the miracle that . . . (hesitates) . . . for the fire that set it alight. What I suddenly saw then was this, that the

222. Barrier, block
223. Without equal, unrivaled
224. Extremely sad, suitable for a funeral
225. Area where boats can be tied and where people can get on and off boats

beleif I had been going on all my life, namely – (Krapp switches off impatiently, winds tape foreward, switches on again) – great granite rocks the foam flying up in the light of the lighhouse and thw wind-gauge spinning like a propellor, clear to me at last that the dark I have always struggled to keep under is in reality – (Krapp curses, switches off, winds tape foreward, switches on again) – unshatterable association until my dissolution of storm and night with the light of the understanding and the fire – (Krapp curses loader, switches off, winds tape foreward, switches on again) – my face in her breasts and my hand on her. We lay there without moving. But under us all moved, and moved us, gently, up and down, and from side to side.

Pause.

Past midnight. Never knew such silence. The earth might be uninhabited.

Pause.

Here I end –

Krapp switches off, winds tabe back, switches on again.

- upper lake, with the punt, bathed off the bank, then pushed out into the stream and drifted. She lay streched out on the floorboards with her hands under her head and her eyes closed. Sun blazing down, bit of a breeze, water nice and lively. I noticed a scratch on her thigh and asked her how she came by it. Picking gooseberries, she said. I said again I thought it was hopeless and no good going on, and she agreed, without opening her eyes. (Pause.) I asked her to look at me and after a few moments – (pause) – after a few moments she did, but the eyes just slits, because of the glare. I bent over her to get them in the shadow and they opened. (Pause. Low.) Let me in. (Pause.) We drifted in among the flags and stuck. The way they went down, sighing, before the stem! (Pause.) I lay down across her with my face in her breasts and my hand on her. We lay there without moving. But under us all moved, and moved us, gently, up and down, and from side to side.

Pause.

Past midnight. Never knew –

Krapp switches off, broods. Finally he fumbles in his pockets,

encounters the banana, takes it out, peers at it, puts it back, fumbles, brings out the envelope, fumbles, puts back envelope, looks at his watch, gets up and goes backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Sound of bottle against glass, then brief siphon. Ten seconds. Bottle against glass alone. Ten seconds. He comes back a little unsteadily into light, goes to the front of table, takes out keys, raises them to his eyes, chooses key, unlocks first drawer, peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out reel, peers at it, locks drawer, puts keys back in his pocket, goes and sits down, takes reel off machine, lays it on dictionary, loads virgin reel on machine, takes envelope from his pocket, consults back of it, lays it on table, switches on, clears his throat and begins to record.

KRAPP

Just been listening to that stupid bastard I took myself for thirty years ago, hard to believe I was ever as bad as that. Thank God that's all done with anyway. (Pause.) The eyes she had! (Broods, realizes he is recording silence, switches off, broods. Finally.) Everything there, everything, all the – (Realizing this is not being recorded, switches on.) Everything there, everything on this old muckball, all the light and dark and famine and feasting of . . . (hesitates) . . . the ages! (In a shout.) Yes! (Pause.) Let that go! Jesus! Take his mind off his homework! Jesus (Pause. Weary.) Ah well, maybe he was right. (Broods. Realizes. Switches off. Consults envelope.) Pah! (Crumples it and throws it away. Broods. Switches on.) Nothing to say, not a squeak. What's a year now? The sour cud and the iron stool. (Pause.) Revelled in the word spool. (With relish.) Spooool! Happiest moment of the past half million. (Pause.) Seventeen copies sold, of which eleven at trade price to free circulating libraries beyond the seas. Getting known. (Pause.) One pound six and something, eight I have little doubt. (Pause.) Crawled out once or twice, before the summer was cold. Sat shivering in the park, drowned in dreams and burning to be gone. Not a soul. (Pause.) Last fancies. (Vehemently.) Keep 'em under! (Pause.) Scalded the eyes out of me reading Effir again, a page a day, with tears again. Effie . . . (Pause.) Could have been happy

with her, up there on the Baltic, and the pines, and the dunes. (Pause.) Could I? (Pause.) And she? (Pause.) Pah! (Pause.) Fanny came in a couple of times. Bony old ghost of a whore. Couldn't do much, but I suppose better than a kick in the crutch. The last time wasn't so bad. How do you manage it, she said, at your age? I told her I'd been saving up for her all my life. (Pause.) Went to Vespers once, like when I as in short trousers. (Pause. Sings.)

Now the day is over,

Night is drawing nigh-igh,

Shadows – (coughing, then almost inaudible) – of the evening Steal across the sky.

(Gasping.) Went to sleep and fell off the pew. (Pause.) Sometimes wondered in the night if a last effort mightn't – (Pause.) Ah finish yout booze now and get to your bed. Go on with this drivel in the morning. Or leave it at that. (Pause.) Leave it at that. (Pause.) Lie propped up in the dark – and wander. Be again in the dingle on a Christmas Eve, gathering holly, the red-berried. (Pause.) Be again on Croghan on a Sunday morning, in the haze, with the bitch, stop and listen to the bells. (Pause.) And so on. (Pause.) Be again, be again. (Pause.) All that old misery. (Pause.) Once wasn't enough for you. (Pause.) Lie down across her.

Long pause. He suddenly bends over machine, switches off, wrenches off tape, throws it away, puts on the other, winds it foreword to the passage he wants, switches on, listens staring front.

TAPE

-gooseberries, she said. I said again I thought it was hopeless and no good going on, and she agreed, without opening her eyes. (Pause.) I asked her to look at me and after a few moments – (pause) – after a few moments she did, but the eyes just slits, because of the glare. I bent over her to get them in the shadow and they opened. (Pause. Low.) Let me in. (Pause.) We drifted in among the flags and stuck. The way they went down, sighing, before the stem! (Pause.) I lay down across her with my face in her breasts and my hand on her. We lay

there without moving. But under us all moved, and moved us, gently, up and down, and from side to side.

Pause. Krapp's lips move. No sound.

Past midnight. Never knew such silence. The earth might be uninhabited.

Pause.

Here I end this reel. Box – (pause) – three, spool – (pause) – five. (Pause. Perhaps my best years are gone. When there was a chance of happiness. But I wouldn't want them back. Not with the fire in me now. No, I wouldn't want them back.

Krapp motionless staring before him. The tape runs on in silence.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature Science Link: Philosophy and Literature

The Theory of Absurd and the Myth of Sisyphus

Absurd was the expression of the spirit of the epoch marred by Nietzsche's "prophecy" – "God is dead." The link between man and God, the human and the divine, was broken. Absurd is man's futile search in the world where you cannot find any eternal truths or values, in the world which is devoid of God. "Heaven is an empty hole. I even wonder where God lives" [Sartre – 1960 : 112].[226] "God does not see me, God does not hear me, God does not know me … Silence is God. Absence is God. God is the loneliness of man. There was no one but myself; I alone decided on Evil; and I alone invented Good. It was I who cheated, who worked miracles, I who accused myself today, I alone who can absolve myself; I, man. If God exists, man is nothing" [ibid. p.148]

"If a man has usurped the place of God he does not know for what purpose he exists. All he knows is that he must choose his own reason for being. Since all men are condemned to die, nothing is of any im-

226. Sartre, Jean-Paul, The Devil and the Good Lord, translated by K.Black, New York, 1960.

portance. He is reduced to a state of spiritual impotence, but he persists in seeking to grasp the truth at any cost. And the truth elicited is that there is no meaning in the universe"[Glicksberg, 1963 : 70, 71][227] In absence of a belief in God, "nothing is of any importance" – all values become arbitrary. The inevitable psychological result of this is a state of nonchalance, apathy, confusion, emptiness, terror, and panic.

The Myth of Sisyphus is a philosophical essay by Albert Camus, where he introduces the philosophy of absurd. He compares the absurdity of man's life with Sisyphus – mythological character, who was condemned to push a boulder up a mountain only to see it roll down again. This was to be repeated throughout eternity. Camus presents Sisyphus's ceaseless and pointless toil as a metaphor for modern lives.

New Forms of Expression in Literature

When potential of literature is exhausted, when "mere anarchy is imposed upon the world … the writer is forced to experiment with new forms of expression" [Clive, 1960 : 4].[228]

"The old, slow, soporific descriptions are no more. The order of the day is laconism – but every word must be supercharged, high-voltage… Syntax becomes elliptical, volatile; complicated pyramids of periods are dismantled and broken down into the single stones of independent clauses. In swift movement the canonical, the habitual eludes the eye: hence the unusual, often strange symbolism and choice of words. The image is sharp, synthetic. It contains only the one basic trait which one has time to seize upon from a moving automobile… A new form is not intelligible to all; for many it is difficult. Maybe, the habitual, the banal is of course simpler, pleasanter, more comfortable… No revolution, no heresy is comfortable and easy. Because it is a leap, it is a rupture of the smooth evolutionary curve, and a rupture is a wound" [Howe, 1967: 20, 21].[229]

227. Glicksberg, I. Charles, The Tragic Vision in Twentieth Century Literature, Carbondale Southern Illinois University Press, 1963.
228. Clive, Geoffrey, The Romantic Enlightment, New York: Meridian Books, 1960.
229. Howe I., The Idea of Modern, Fawcett Publications, 1967.

Tragic Vision in Twentieth Century Literature

In his famous book "The Tragic Vision in Twentieth Century Literature", Charles Glicksberg writes that the twentieth-century literature gives expression to a complex, interwoven theme of Promethean defiance and Sisyphean despair. The evangel of Nihilism that Nietzsche prophetically proclaimed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century has vanquished the realm of the sacred" [Glicksberg, 1963 : 3].[230] Later he states that the only weapon with which the modern writers can combat the oppressive sense of the victimization of man is to view the human condition from the perspective of irony. "The spirit of irony is today woven into the fabric of the tragic vision. The tragic view of life was now incorporated with the comic vein, the sense of the absurd" [Glicksberg, 1963 : 7].[231]

Ironic Vision of Postmodernist Literature

Ironic vision, along with black humor, the *sense of absurd*, becomes the most recognizable aspect of **postmodernism** (though the idea of employing irony and black humor did not start with postmodernists). "Postmodernist literature exemplifies a deep skepticism, an encounter with the existential absurd" [Neary, 1999 : 148][232]. According to D. Lodge "the general idea of the world resisting the compulsive attempts of the human consciousness to interpret it, of the human predicament being in some sense "absurd," does underlie a good deal of postmodernist unity" [Lodge, 1977 : 225-226].[233]

Linda Hutcheon, known for her influential theories of postmodernism claimed postmodern fiction as a whole could be characterized as ironic. Irony and black humour became central features in postmodern works.

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230. Glicksberg, I. Charles, The Tragic Vision in Twentieth Century Literature, Carbondale Southern Illinois University Press, 1963.
231.Ibid
232. Neary, John, Like and Unlike God: religious imaginations in modern and contemporary fiction, 1999.
233. Lodge, David, The modes of Modern Writing, 1977

Basing on the theoretical foundations above decide why Samuel Beckette is acknowledged as one of the **last modernist** and one of the **first postmodernist writers.**

Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape Krapp's Last Tape* is usually considered as a hymn to failure and despair, loneliness in aging, the loss of loved ones.

Now consider the following passage:

"Krapp remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, looks at his watch, fumbles in his pockets, takes out an envelope, puts it back, fumbles, takes out a small bunch of keys, raises it to his eyes, chooses a key, gets up and moves to front of table. He stoops, unlocks first drawer, peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a reel of tape, peers at it, puts it back, locks drawer, unlocks second drawer peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts keys back in his pocket. He turns, advances to edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, drops skin at his feet, puts end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he bites off the end, turns aside and begins pacing to and fro at edge of stage, in the light, i.e. not more than four or five paces either way, meditatively eating banana. He treads on skin, slips, nearly falls, recovers himself, stoops and peers at skin and finally pushes it, still stooping, with his foot over the edge of the stage into pit. He resumes his pacing, finishes banana, returns to table, sits down, remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, takes keys from his pockets, raises them to his eyes, chooses key, gets up and moves to front of table, unlocks second drawer, takes out a second large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts back his keys in his pocket, turns, advances to the edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, tosses skin into pit, puts an end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he has an idea, puts banana in his waistcoat pocket, the end emerging, and goes with all the speed he can muster backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Loud pop of cork. Fifteen seconds. He comes back into light carrying an old ledger and sits down at table. He lays ledger on table, wipes his mouth, wipes his

hands on the front of his waistcoat, brings them smartly together and rubs them."

Why do the readers laugh when a lonely and aging man, who wears dirty white shoes and no socks, searches his pockets for a key ring, takes out a banana, peels it and drops the skin? Why does it cause ridicule when we read this passage?

STYLE AND NARRATION

Beckett's writing style is characterized by omitting the use of various grammatical elements and refusing employing conventional syntax. He abandons almost all forms of punctuation. Instead makes use of fragmented phrases and one-word expressions.

How does Beckett experiment with new forms of expression in *Krapp's Last Tape*?

Most of Beckett's works are narrated as first-person monologues. What kind of storytelling technique does he employ in *Krapp's Last Tape?*

Character

The nihilistic[234] literature draws characters with unity of selves broken into fragments. Nihilistic character has nothing to live for. Quentin Compson in "The Sound and Fury" by W. Faulkner, feels all he has sought and suffered is denied significance. He recalls what his alcoholic father taught him: "all men are just dolls stuffed with Sawdust swept up from the trash heaps where all previous dolls had been thrown away the sawdust flowing from what wounds in what side that not for me died not [Faulkner, 1946 : 194].[235]

Nihilistic character suffers from the absence of meaning. He becomes a "prisoner of a destiny that is both tedious and meaningless. He lacks the will to shape his future; he cannot make things happen

234. the Latin word "nihil" means "nothing"
235. Faulkner, W., The Sound and the Fury, New York, 1946.

and yet, irrationally, he waits for something to happen. It is foolish to look for reasons, a principle of justification for life. The hero has given up to struggle; he will be whatever he is. But what is he? A simulacrum, a shadow, without any convictions to buoy him up. He simply exists. He is not really alive but dead. The thought of infinity fills him with horror … eh can find no sense in everlasting present" [Glicksberg, 1963 : 72, 73].[236]

What leads Krapp to think about past and present with regret?

Beckett focuses on characters that face a meaningless and absurd existence. His characters are filled with nothingness as they attempt to find meaning for their existence. He often draws them grotesque.

In *Krapp's Last Tape* Beckett introduces only one character, whose only conversations are with a tape recording of himself that he made thirty years ago.

Krapp has an ambition to change the world with his art but realizes that his "best years are gone" and he has wasted his life in search of meaning.

Why does the writer draw Krapp as a grotesque character? What forms and techniques does he employ to draw a character who fails to overcome absurdity?

Antihero

The term **antihero** is used to describe a character antithetical to traditional heroism. The modernist literature changed the way people thought of the concept of "hero." In his novel *"Ulysses"* instead of Ulysses' adventures on his way home to Penelope, Joyce gives us an ordinary Jewish man by the name of Leopold who "ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with crustcrumbs, fried hencods' roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave

236. Glicksberg, I. Charles, The Tragic Vision in Twentieth Century Literature, Carbondale Southern Illinois University Press, 1963.

to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine."

Is Beckett's character an antihero?

Theme and Symbols

Becket's themes are often absurdist.

Can the theme of Beckett's play be what the very title implies – Krapp will not record another tape as he realizes that his life was devoid of meaning?

Do his words "*Now the day is over,Night is drawing nigh-igh,Shadows – (coughing, then almost inaudible) – of the evening Steal across the sky"* have symbolic meaning?

Does the opening sentence of the play "*A late evening in the future"* have symbolic meaning?

Graham Greene is an outstanding English writer, a playwright, and a literary critic. He wrote children's stories, adventure stories, thrillers, film scripts. All his literary works are distinguished by his deep psychological insight. His most famous literary works include *Brighton Rock* (1938), *The Quiet American* (1955) (After the publication of this novel he was accused of being anti-American), *Our Man in Havana* (1958) and *The Honorary Consul* (1973). He had a long association with the movies, and was involved in *This Gun for Hire* (1942, with Alan Ladd), *The Third Man* (1949, starring Orson Welles) and *Loser Takes All* (1956).

A SHOCKING ACCIDENT

Jerome was called into his housemaster's room in the break between the second and the third class on a Tuesday morning. He had no fear of trouble, for he was a warden – the name that the proprietor and headmaster of a rather expensive preparatory school had chosen to give to approved, reliable[237] boys in the lower forms (from a warden one became a guardian and finally before leaving, it was hoped for Marlborough or Rugby, a crusader). The housemaster, Mr Wordsworth, sat behind his desk with an appearance of perplexity[238] and apprehension.[239] Jerome had the odd impression when he entered that he was a cause of fear.

'Sit down, Jerome,' Mr Wordsworth said. 'All going well with the trigonometry?'

'Yes, sir.'

'I've had a telephone call, Jerome. From your aunt. I'm afraid I have bad news for you.'

'Yes, sir?'

'Your father has had an accident.'

'Oh.'

Mr Wordsworth looked at him with some surprise. 'A serious accident.'

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237. trustworthy
238. Confusion, puzzlement
239. Worry or fear that something unpleasant may happen

‘Yes, sir?’

Jerome worshipped his father: the verb is exact. As man re-creates God, so Jerome re-created his father – from a restless widowed author into a mysterious adventurer who travelled in far places – Nice, Beirut, Majorca, even the Canaries. The time had arrived about his eighth birthday when Jerome believed that his father either ‘ran guns’ or was a member of the British Secret Service. Now it occurred to him that his father might have been wounded in ‘a hail of machine-gun bullets’.

Mr Wordsworth played with the ruler on his desk. He seemed at a loss how to continue. He said, ‘You know your father was in Naples?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Your aunt heard from the hospital today.’

‘Oh.’

Mr Wordsworth said with desperation, ‘It was a street accident.’

‘Yes, sir?’ It seemed quite likely to Jerome that they would call it a street accident. The police of course fired first; his father would not take human life except as a last resort.

‘I’m afraid your father was very seriously hurt indeed.’

‘Oh.’

‘In fact, Jerome, he died yesterday. Quite without pain.’

‘Did they shoot him through the heart?’

‘I beg your pardon. What did you say, Jerome?’

‘Did they shoot him through the heart?’

‘Nobody shot him, Jerome. A pig fell on him.’ An inexplicable **convulsion**[240] took place in the nerves of Mr Wordsworth’s face; it really looked for a moment as though he were going to laugh. He closed his eyes, **composed**[241] his features and said rapidly as though it were necessary to **expel**[242] the story as rapidly as possible. ‘Your father was walking along a street in Naples when a pig fell on him. A shocking accident. Apparently in the poorer quarters of Naples they keep pigs on their balconies. This one was on the fifth floor. It had grown too fat. The balcony broke. The pig fell on your father.’

240. Seizure, fit, spasm
241. Calmed, self-possessed
242. Drive out, force out

Mr Wordsworth left his desk rapidly and went to the window, turning his back on Jerome. He shook a little with emotion.

Jerome said, 'What happened to the pig?'

This was not **callousness**[243] on the part of Jerome, as it was interpreted by Mr Wordsworth to his colleagues (he even discussed with them whether, perhaps, Jerome was yet fitted to be a warden). Jerome was only attempting to visualize the strange scene to get the details right. Nor was Jerome a boy who cried; he was a boy who **brooded**,[244] and it never occurred to him at his preparatory school that the circumstances of his father's death were comic – they were still part of the mysteries of life. It was later, in his first term at his public school, when he told the story to his best friend, that he began to realize how it affected others. Naturally after that **disclosure**[245] he was known, rather unreasonably, as Pig.

Unfortunately his aunt had no sense of humour. There was an enlarged snapshot of his father on the piano; a large sad man in an unsuitable dark suit posed in Capri with an umbrella (to guard him against sunstroke), the Faraglione rocks forming the background. By the age of sixteen Jerome was well aware that the portrait looked more like the author of *Sunshine and Shade* and *Ramblers in the Balearics* than an agent of the Secret Service. All the same he loved the memory of his father: he still possessed an album fitted with picture-postcards (the stamps had been soaked off long ago for his other collection), and it pained him when his aunt **embarked**[246] with strangers on the story of his father's death.

'A shocking accident,' she would begin, and the stranger would compose his or her features into the correct shape for interest and **commiseration**.[247] Both reactions, of course, were false, but it was terrible for Jerome to see how suddenly, midway in her **rambling**[248] discourse, the interest would become genuine. 'I can't think how such things can be allowed in a civilized country,' his aunt would say. 'I

243. Heartlessness, pitilessness, cruelty
244. To think a lot about something that makes you annoyed
245. Revelation, discovery
246. Started conversation, engaged in conversation
247. Condolence, sympathy (when something unpleasant has happened to somebody)
248. Confused, incoherent

suppose one has to regard Italy as civilized. One is prepared for all kinds of things abroad, of course, and my brother was a great traveller. He always carried a water-filter with him. It was far less expensive, you know, than buying all those bottles of mineral water. My brother always said that his filter paid for his dinner wine. You can see from that what a careful man he was, but who could possibly have expected when he was walking along the Via Dottore Manuele Panucci on his way to the Hydrographic Museum that a pig would fall on him?' That was the moment when the interest became genuine.

Jerome's father had not been a very distinguished writer, but the time always seems to come, after an author's death, when somebody thinks it worth his while to write a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* announcing the preparation of a biography and asking to see any letters or documents or receive anecdotes from friends of the dead man. Most of the biographies, of course, never appear – one wonders whether the whole thing may not be an obscure form of blackmail and whether many a potential writer of a biography or thesis finds the means in this way to finish his education at Kansas or Nottingham. Jerome, however, as a chartered accountant, lived far from the literary world. He did not realize how small the menace really was, or that the danger period for someone of his father's obscurity had long passed. Sometimes he rehearsed the method of recounting his father's death so as to reduce the comic element to its smallest dimensions - it would be of no use to refuse information, for in that case the biographer would undoubtedly visit his aunt who was living to a great old age with no sign of flagging.

It seemed to Jerome that there were two possible methods – the first led gently up to the accident, so that by the time it was described the listener was so well prepared that the death came really as an anti-climax. The chief danger of laughter in such a story was always surprise. When he rehearsed his method Jerome began boringly enough.

'You know Naples and those high **tenement**[249] buildings? Somebody once told me that the Neapolitan always feels at home in New York just as the man from Turin feels at home in London because the river runs in much the same way in both cities. Where was I? Oh,

249. Apartment building

yes. Naples, of course. You'd be surprised in the poorer quarters what things they keep on the balconies of those sky-scraping tenements – not washing, you know, or bedding, but things like **livestock**,[250] chickens or even pigs. Of course the pigs get no exercise whatever and fatten all the quicker.' He could imagine how his hearer's eyes would have glazed by this time. 'I've no idea, have you, how heavy a pig can be, but these old buildings are all badly in need of repair. A balcony on the fifth floor gave way under one of those pigs. It struck the third floor balcony on its way down and sort of **ricocheted** [251]into the street. My father was on the way to the Hydrographic Museum when the pig hit him. Coming from that height and that angle it broke his neck.' This was really a masterly attempt to make an **intrinsically**[252] interesting subject boring.

The other method Jerome rehearsed had the virtue of brevity.

'My father was killed by a pig.'

'Really? In India?'

'No, in Italy.'

'How interesting. I never realized there was pig-sticking in Italy. Was your father keen on polo?'

In course of time, neither too early nor too late, rather as though, in his capacity as a chartered accountant, Jerome had studied the statistics and taken the average, he became engaged to be married: to a pleasant fresh-faced girl of twenty-five whose father was a doctor in Pinner. Her name was Sally, her favourite author was still Hugh Walpole, and she had adored babies ever since she had been given a doll at the age of five which moved its eyes and made water. Their relationship was contented rather than exciting, as became the love-affair of a chartered accountant; it would never have done if it had interfered with the figures.

One thought worried Jerome, however. Now that within a year he might himself become a father, his love for the dead man increased; he realized what affection had gone into the picture-postcards. He felt a longing to protect his memory, and uncertain whether this quiet love of his would survive if Sally were so insensitive as to laugh when she

250. Farm animals, cattle
251. Glanced off
252. Inherently; innately

heard the story of his father's death. Inevitably she would hear it when Jerome brought her to dinner with his aunt. Several times he tried to tell her himself, as she was naturally anxious to know all she could that concerned him.

'You were very small when your father died?'

'Just nine.'

'Poor little boy,' she said.

'I was at school. They broke the news to me.'

'Did you take it very hard?'

'I can't remember.'

'You never told me how it happened.'

'It was very sudden. A street accident.'

'You'll never drive fast, will you, Jemmy?' (She had begun to call him 'Jemmy'.) It was too late then to try the second method – the one he thought of as the pig-sticking one.

They were going to marry quietly in a registry-office and have their honeymoon at Torquay. He avoided taking her to see his aunt until a week before the wedding, but then the night came, and he could not have told himself whether his apprehension was more for his father's memory or the security of his own love.

The moment came all too soon. 'Is that Jemmy's father?' Sally asked, picking up the portrait of the man with the umbrella.

'Yes, dear. How did you guess?'

'He has Jemmy's eyes and brow, hasn't he?'

'Has Jerome lent you his books?'

'No.'

'I will give you a set for your wedding. He wrote so tenderly about his travels. My own favourite is *Nooks and Crannies* . He would have had a great future. It made that shocking accident all the worse.'

'Yes?'

Jerome longed to leave the room and not see that loved face crinkle with irresistible amusement.

'I had so many letters from his readers after the pig fell on him.' She had never been so abrupt before. And then the miracle happened. Sally did not laugh. Sally sat with open eyes of horror while his aunt told her the story, and at the end, 'How horrible,' Sally said. 'It makes

you think, doesn't it? Happening like that. Out of a clear sky.'

Jerome's heart sang with joy. It was as though she had appeased his fear for ever. In the taxi going home he kissed her with more passion than he had ever shown and she returned it. There were babies in her pale blue pupils, babies that rolled their eyes and made water.

'A week today,' Jerome said, and she squeezed his hand. 'Penny for your thoughts, my darling.'

'I was wondering,' Sally said, 'what happened to the poor pig?'

'They almost certainly had it for dinner,' Jerome said happily and kissed the dear child again.

Analysis and Interpretation

Style

Greene's style is generally characterized by clarity and straightforwardness and by avoidance of modernist experiments. He is regarded as a master of depicting inner struggles his characters experience. His writing incorporates deep meaning and dry British humour.

What language means does he employ to depict Jerome's inner struggles? Can you identify sarcastic humour in his writing? Illustrate your answer with examples from the story.

Setting

The settings of Greene's stories were usually poverty stricken and hot countries (Africa, Haiti, Mexico, etc.)

"A shocking accident" happened in Naples, where in poor districts it was probably quite natural to keep pigs on the balcony.

"Your father was walking along a street in Naples when a pig fell on him. A shocking accident. Apparently in the poorer quarters of Naples they keep pigs on their balconies. This one was on the fifth floor. It had grown too fat. The balcony broke. The pig fell on your father."

In an interview G.Greene says that the story is based on a real fact. He says that there was an accident of that kind in Naples, where a pig was being fattened on a balcony.

Title

Is "A Shocking Accident" an ironic title for the story?

The title words "accident," "a shocking accident" are repeated many times throughout the story. Does this create the ironic effect?

Sarcastic Irony

How is the sense of absurd brought to readers?

Sarcasm usually refers to humor in a mocking fashion and creates comedic effect. It is often described as "dry humour." Irony plays a large role in facilitating sarcasm. Throughout much of history sarcasm was considered a "lower form" of wit because it was considered so unabashedly disrespectful to the person or object being described. In the nineteenth century, famous Scottish historian and essayist Thomas Carlyle once remarked that "sarcasm is the language of the devil, for which reason I have long since so good as denounced it." Over the years and certainly today, sarcasm has become a commonly welcomed and appreciated form of humor.

Science Link

Complex in Psychology

A complex is a group of partially or totally unconscious psychic content (representations, memories, fantasies, affects, and so on), which constitutes a more or less organized whole, such that the activation of one of its components leads to the activation of others.

Psychological trauma may set in after a distressing or life-threatening event. Sufferers may develop extreme anxiety, or they may have ongoing problems with relationships and self-esteem.

Interpret

Do you think that Jerome developed a complex? Did he overcome it? What circumstances helped him to overcome his complex?

Find passages in the story which give information on Jerome's trauma, his extreme anxiety.

Why does the narrator choose the sarcastic humour in the story? Is he willing to suggest that life is absurd?

Interpret

The author tells us that Jerome worshiped his father and in his imagination considered him to be a secret agent.

Jerome worshipped his father: the verb is exact. As man re-creates God, so Jerome re-created his father – from a restless widowed author into a mysterious adventurer who travelled in far places – Nice, Beirut, Majorca, even the Canaries. The time had arrived about his eighth birthday when Jerome believed that his father either 'ran guns' or was a member of the British Secret Service. Now it occurred to him that his father might have been wounded in 'a hail of machine-gun bullets'.

Then, why does he react to the news with the absurd question – "What happened to the pig?"

Interpret

"I was wondering," Sally said, "what happened to the poor pig?"

"They almost certainly had it for dinner," Jerome said happily and kissed the dear child again.

Sally is the first person who reacts properly to the tragedy. Then, why does she ask the absurd question? Does the author intensify how absurd life is?

At the end of the story Jerome no longer reacts painfully. Is he cured from his complex?

Muriel Spark is a famous Scottish short-story writer, a novelist, and a poet. Critics note that her style is unique, intriguing, exhilarating, provoking, cheerful, acute, and even venomous. She started writing when she was more than forty years old. Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh supported her in her decision.

You Should Have Seen the Mess
By Muriel Spark

I am now more than glad that I did not pass into the Grammar School five years ago, although it was a disappointment at the time. I was always good at English, but not so good at the other subjects!

I am glad that I went to the Secondary Modern School, because it was only constructed the year before. Therefore, it was much more hygienic than the Grammar School. The Secondary Modern was light and airy, and the walls were painted with a bright, washable, gloss. One day, I was sent over to the Grammar School with a note for one of the teachers, and you should have seen the mess! The corridors were dusty, and I saw dust on the window **ledges**[253], which were **chipped**.[254] I saw into one of the classrooms. It was very untidy in there.

I am also glad that I did not go to the Grammar School, because of what it does to one's habits. This may appear to be a strange remark, at first sight. It is a good thing to have an education behind you, and I don't believe in ignorance, but I have had certain experiences with educated people, since going out into the world.

I am seventeen years of age, and left, school two years ago last month. I had my A certificate for typing, so got my first job, as a junior, in a solicitor's office. Mum was pleased at this, and Dad said it was a first-class start, as it was an old-established firm. I must say that when I went for the interview I was surprised at the windows, and the stairs up to the offices were also far from clean. There was a little waiting

253. A narrow flat shelf fixed below the window
254. Broken, damaged

room, where some of the elements were missing from the gas fire, and the carpet on the floor was worn. However, Mr. Heygate's office, into which I was shown for the interview, was better. The furniture was old, but it was polished, and there was a good carpet, I will say that. The glass of the bookcase was very clean.

I was to start on the Monday, so along I went. They took me to the general office, where there were two senior shorthand-typists, and a clerk, Mr. Gresham, who was far from smart in appearance. You should have seen the mess!! There was no floor covering whatsoever, and so dusty everywhere. There were shelves all round the room, with old box files on them. The box files were falling to pieces, and all the old papers inside them were crumpled. The worst shock of all was the tea cups. It was my duty to make tea, mornings and afternoons. Miss Bewlay showed me where everything was kept. It was kept in an old orange box, and the cups were all cracked. There were not enough saucers to go round, etc. I will not go into the facilities, but they were also far from hygienic. After three days, I told Mum, and she was upset, most of all about the cracked cups. We never keep a cracked cup, but throw it out, because those cracks can harbour germs. So Mum gave me my own cup to take to the office.

Then at the end of the week, when I got my salary, Mr. Heygate said, `Well, Lorna, what are you going to do with your first pay?' I did not like him saying this, and I nearly passed a comment, but I said, `I don't know.' He said, `What do you do in the evenings, Lorna? Do you watch Telly?' I did take this as an insult, because we call it TV, and his remark made me out to be uneducated. I just stood, and did not answer, and he looked surprised. Next day, Saturday, I told Mum and Dad about the facilities, and we decided I should not go back to that job. Also, the desks in the general office were rickety. Dad was indignant, because Mr. Heygate's concern was flourishing, and he had letters after his name.

Everyone admires our flat, because Mum keeps it spotless, and Dad keeps doing things to it. He has done it up all over, and got permission from the Council to re-modernise the kitchen. I well recall the Health Visitor remarking to Mum, `You could eat off your floor, Mrs. Merrifield.' It is true that you could eat your lunch off Mum's floors,

and any hour of the day or night you will find every corner spick and span.

Next, I was sent by the agency to a Publisher's for an interview, because of being good at English. One look was enough!! My next interview was a success and I am still at Low's Chemical Co. It is a modem block, with a quarter of an hour rest period, morning and afternoon. Mr. Marwood is very smart in appearance. He is well spoken, although he has not got a university education behind him. There is special lighting over the desks, and the typewriters are latest models.

So I am happy at Low's. But I have met other people, of an educated type, in the past year, and it has opened my eyes. It so happened that I had to go to the Doctor's house, to fetch a prescription for my young brother, Trevor, when the epidemic was on. I rang the bell, and Mrs. Darby came to the door. She was small, with fair hair, but too long, and a green maternity dress. But she was very nice to me. I had to wait in their living-room, and you should have seen the state it was in! There were broken toys on the carpet, and the ash trays were full up. There were contemporary pictures on the walls, but the furniture was not contemporary, but old-fashioned, with covers which were past standing up to another wash, I should say. To cut a long story short, Dr Darby and Mrs. Darby have always been very kind to me and they meant everything for the best. Dr Darby is also short and fair, and they have three children, a girl and a boy, and now a baby boy.

When I went that day for the prescription, Dr Darby said to me, `You look pale, Lorna. It's the London atmosphere. Come on a picnic with us, in the car, on Saturday.' After that I went with the Darbys more and more, I liked them, but I did not like the mess, and it was a surprise. But I also kept in with them for the opportunity of meeting people, and Mum and Dad were pleased that I had made nice friends. So I did not say anything about the cracked lino, and the paintwork all chipped. The children's clothes were very shabby for a doctor, and she changed them out of their school clothes when they came home from school, into those worn-out garments. Mum always kept us spotless to go out to play, and I do not like to say it, but those Darby children frequently looked like the Leary family, which the Council evicted[255]

255. Drove out; cast out

from our block, as they were far from houseproud.

One day, when I was there, Mavis (as I called Mrs. Darby by then) put her head out of the window, and shouted to the boy, "John, stop peeing over the cabbages at once. Pee on the lawn." I did not know which way to look. Mum would never say a word like that from the window, and I know for a fact that Trevor would never pass water outside, not even bathing in the sea.

I went there usually at the weekends, but sometimes on-weekdays, after supper. They had an idea to make a match for me with a chemist's assistant, whom they had taken up too. He was an orphan, and I do not say, there was anything wrong with that. But he was not accustomed to those little extras that I was. He was a good looking boy, I will say that. So I went once to a dance and twice to the films with him. To look at, he was quite clean in appearance. But there was only hot water at the weekend at his place, and he said that a bath once a week was sufficient. Jim (as I called Dr Darby by then) said it was sufficient also, and surprised me. He did not have much money, and I do not hold that against him. But there was no hurry for me, and I could wait for a man in a better position, so that I would not miss those little extras. So he started going out with a girl from the coffee bar, and did not come to the Darbys very much then.

There were plenty of boys at the office, but I will say this for the Darbys, they had lots of friends coming and going, and they had interesting conversation, although sometimes it gave me a surprise, and I did not know where to look. And sometimes they had people who were very down and out, although there is no need to be. But most of the guests were different, so it made a comparison with the boys at the office, who were not so educated in their conversation.

Now it was near the time for Mavis to have her baby, and I was to come in at the weekend, to keep an eye on the children, while the help had her day off. Mavis did not go away to have her baby, but would have it at home, in their double bed, as they did not have twin beds, although he was a Doctor. A girl I knew, in our block, was engaged, but was let down, and even she had her baby in the labour ward. I was sure the bedroom was not hygienic for having a baby, but I did not mention it.

One day, after the baby boy came along, they took me in the car to the country, to see Jim's mother. The baby was put in a carrycot at the back of the car. He began to cry, and without a word of a lie, Jim said to him over his shoulder, `Oh shut your gob, you little bastard.' I did not know what to do, and Mavis was smoking a cigarette. Dad would not dream of saying such a thing to Trevor or I. When we arrived at Jim's mother's place, Jim said, `It's a fourteenth-century cottage, Lorna.' I could well believe it. It was very cracked and old, and it made one wonder how Jim could let his old mother live in this tumble-down cottage, as he was so good to everyone else. So Mavis knocked at the door, and the old lady came. There was not much anyone could do to the inside. Mavis said, `Isn't it charming, Lorna?' If that was a joke, it was going too far. I said to the old Mrs. Darby, `Are you going to be re-housed?' but she did not understand this, and I explained how you have to apply to the Council, and keep at them. But it was funny that the Council had not done something already, when they go round condemning. Then old Mrs. Darby said, `My dear, I shall be rehoused in the Grave.' I did not know where to look.

There was a carpet hanging on the wall, which I think was there to hide a damp spot. She had a good TV set, I will say that. But some of the walls were bare brick, and the facilities were outside through the garden. The furniture was far from new.

One Saturday afternoon, as I happened to go to the Darbys, they were just going off to a film, and they took me too. It was the Curzon, and afterwards we went to a flat in Curzon Street. It was a very clean block, I will say that, and there were good carpets at the entrance. The couple there had contemporary furniture, and they also spoke about music. It was a nice place, but there was no Welfare Centre to the flats, where people could go for social intercourse, advice and guidance. But they were well-spoken, and I met Willy Morley, who was an artist. Willy sat beside me, and we had a drink. He was young, dark, with a dark shirt, so one could not see right away if he was clean. Soon after this, Jim said to me, `Willy wants to paint you, Lorna. But you'd better ask your Mum.' Mum said it was all right if he was a friend of the Darbys.

I can honestly say that Willy's place was the most unhygienic

place I have seen in my life. He said I had an unusual type of beauty, which he must capture. This was when we came back to his place from the restaurant. The light was very dim, but I could see the bed had not been made, and the sheets were far from clean. He said he must paint me, but I told Mavis I did not like to go back there. `Don't you like Willy?' she asked. I could not deny that I liked Willy, in a way. There was something about him, I will say that Mavis said, `I hope he hasn't been making a pass at you, Lorna.' I said he had not done so, which was almost true, because he did not attempt to go to the full extent. It was always unhygienic when I went to Willy's place, and I told him so once, but he said, `Lorna, you are a joy!' He had a nice way, and he took me out in his car, which was a good one, but dirty inside, like his place. Jim said one day, `He has pots of money, Lorna,' and Mavis said, `You might make a man of him, as he is keen on you.' They always said Willy came from a good family?

But I saw that one could not do anything with him. He would not change his shirt very often, or get clothes, but he went around like a tramp, lending people money, as I have seen with my own eyes. His place was in a terrible mess, with the empty bottles, and laundry in the corner. He gave me several gifts over the period, which I took, as he would have only given them away, but he never tried to go to the full extent. He never painted my portrait, as he was painting fruit on a table all that time, and they said his pictures were marvelous, and thought Willy and I were getting married.

One night, when I went home, I was upset as usual, after Willy's place: Mum and Dad had gone to bed, and I looked round our kitchen which is done in primrose and white. Then I went into the living-room, where Dad has done one wall in a patterned paper, deep rose and white, and the other walls pale rose, with white wood-work. The suit is new, and Mum keeps everything beautiful. So it came to me, all of a sudden, what a fool I was, going with Willy. I agree to equality, but as to me marrying Willy, as I said to Mavis, when I recall his place, and the good carpet gone greasy, not to mention the paint oozing out of the tubes, I think it would break my heart to sink so low.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Narrator is the speaker or "voice" of the narrative discourse (Genette, 1980 [1972]: 186). He or she is the agent who establishes communicative contact with an addressee (the "narratee"), who manages the exposition, who decides *what* is to be told, *how* it is to be told (especially, from what point of view, and in what sequence), and *what is to be left out*.

Depending on how the presence of a narrator is signaled in the text, one distinguishes between "overt" and "covert" narrators:

An **overt narrator** is one who refers to him/herself in the first person ("I", "we" etc.), one who directly or indirectly addresses the narratee, one who offers reader-friendly exposition whenever it is needed (using the "conative" or "appellative" discourse function), one who exhibits a "discoursal stance" or "slant" toward characters and events, especially in his/her use of rhetorical figures, imagery, evaluative phrases and emotive or subjective expressions ("expressive function"), one who "intrudes" into the story in order to pass philosophical comments, one who has a distinctive voice.

A **covert narrator**, in contrast, is one who exhibits none of the features of overtness listed above: specifically, s/he is one who neither refers to him- or herself nor addresses any narratees, one who has a more or less neutral (nondistinctive) voice and style, who does not provide exposition even when it is urgently needed, one who does not intrude or interfere, one who lets the story events unfold in their natural sequence and tempo ("lets the story tell itself", as is frequently, though not uncontroversially, said [Lubbock 1957 [1921]: 62; Genette 1988 [1983]: 45]); in short, one whose discourse fulfills no obvious conative, phatic, appellative, or expressive functions. Covert narration can be most easily achieved by letting the action be seen through the eyes of an internal focalizer.[256]

256. Jahn: PPP/Narratology

Analysis and Interpretation

Style

Generally Muriel Spark's style is famous for concentrating on dialogue, which makes her writing similar to live speech. Critics also speak about her style as exhilarating, playful and rigorous, cheerful and venomous, hilariously acute and coolly supernatural.

Does this show in "You Should Have Seen the Mess"?

Point of View: First Person Narrative

The narrator in "You Should Have Seen the Mess" is the protagonist character who reveals her personal thoughts and feelings and what she sees and is told by other characters. This kind of narration is called first person narration. Lorna tells the readers how she lives, speaks about the people she works with or is acquainted with, etc.

What Kind of narrator is Lorna – overt or covert?

Do you "hear" the author's voice in the story?

Mood

What is the mood of the story?

Is it cheerful, ironic, mocking, humorous or serious?

Theme

According to critics Muriel Spark's works have a constant theme running through. Spark's works embody her Catholicism, addressing the problems of human society in Modernity when God is not present, while emphasizing the value of religious ideas, such as faith and forgiveness.

We may conclude that the theme in this story is suggested by the narrator (Lorna) based on her experiences, thoughts and conversations. Lorna emphasizes the aspect of cleanliness – she likes clean rooms and clean people. She does not approve of expressions telly or pee and defends "purity of language"; she hates unclean, "unhygienic" people, she keeps aloof from men; any dirty thing gives her a surprise or even a shock ("The worst shock of all was the cups"). Her ideas about cleanliness are repeated throughout the story.

In what way is the religious aspect (if there is at all) expressed in the story? Is it connected with the theme in the story?

According to Puritan tradition the cleanliness of body is regarded as a consequence of the due reverence of God. Being spotless, stainless is tantamount to being religious and being close to God – "cleanliness is next to godliness."

Thematic Vocabulary and Language Devices

Lorna likes The Secondary Modern School because it *"was light and airy, and the walls were painted with a bright, washable, gloss"* and it was more *"hygienic than the Grammar School."* She disapproves of the Grammar school – *"You should have seen the mess! The corridors were dusty, and I saw dust on the window ledges, which were chipped. I saw into one of the classrooms. It was very untidy in there."*

Find similar passages in the story, where Lorna describes different offices or different people.

Does the thematic vocabulary suggest that Lorna is obsessed with the idea of cleanliness?

Muriel spark introduces many language devices. They all serve the purpose of emphasizing the cheerful mood and tone and major theme in the story.

"Offices were far from clean"; "who was far from smart in appearance;" "facilities were far from hygienic;" "sheets were far from clean."

"Window ledges were chipped;" "the furniture was far from new;" "they were far from houseproud;"

"The paintwork was all chipped;" "the cups were all cracked;" "cracked lino."

"There were shelves all round the room, with old box files on them. The box files were falling to pieces..."

Identify which language devices are presented above and try to find some more in the text.

Title

What does the title of the story suggest? What tone does it establish? In what way is it connected with the theme in the context of the whole story?

The words of the title are repeated many times throughout the story. What effect does the repetition create? Does the semantic radius of the title "embrace" the whole story?

Plot Development

Is it possible to analyze "You should Have Seen the Mess" according to plot elements?

When does the climax occur?

Character

How does the writer manage to characterize Lorna? What kind of characterization does she employ – direct or indirect?

Interpret

What kind of character does the writer draw – is Lorna's thinking stereotypical? Does she take superficial decisions? Is she obsessed with the idea of cleanliness?

Identify yourself with the character

In what way is your thinking stereotypical? Can you admit that sometimes you are narrow-minded?

Are you sometimes obsessed with some ideas?

Donald Barthelme

Donald Barthelme is an American postmodernist writer, regarded as one of the greatest innovators and experimenters. He is usually viewed by critics as a highly philosophical writer. They state that his deepest intellectual roots seem to lie in the philosophies of existentialism and postmodernism. He worked steadily throughout his life, producing four novels (*Snow White, The Dead Father, Paradise* and *The King*) and over a hundred short stories (originally collected in *Come Back, Dr. Caligari*; *Unspeakable Practices, Unnatural Acts*; *City Life*; and *Sadness*, and later compiled into two "best-of" books, *Sixty Stories* and *Forty Stories*) as well as a nonfiction book *Guilty Pleasures* and a plethora of short essays and interviews on a diverse range of topics. In spite of this, he is mainly famous for his short stories.

Style

Famous mainly for his short stories, Barthelme was a relentless innovator and experimenter. His principal methods were the collage and pastiche. Though in his earlier works he described ordinary life and employed more traditional forms of writing. His short stories presented below are absurdist and surreal, playful and ironic. His symbolism mainly bases on nonsense. "One common term for this kind of story-telling is "metafiction" (By Gus Negative, 2000 The Scriptorium, Donald Barthelme).

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Postmodernism

Scholars find it difficult to decide when exactly the postmodernist period began. Most generally accepted view is that it emerged as an area of academic study in mid-1980s. The term "postmodernism" is not easily defined, because this phenomenon embraces wide variety areas of study – philosophy, film, music, art, literature, etc.

This movement seems to emerge from or supersede modernism. The period of modernism began in 1910 (as Virginia Woolf stated "In or about December, 1910, human nature changed") and so called "high modernist period" continued for about twenty years. The founders of this literary movement and its major literary figures – J. Joyce, V. Woolf, T. Eliot, E. Pound, etc., experimented in new forms of expression in literature.

Below we shall present some characteristic features of modernism described by Mary Klages in order to decide how postmodernism follows the essential features of modernism:

"From a literary perspective, the main characteristics of modernism include:

1. An emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity in writing (and in visual arts as well); an emphasis on HOW seeing (or reading or perception itself) takes place, rather than on WHAT is perceived. An example of this would be stream-of-consciousness writing.

2. A movement away from the apparent objectivity provided by omniscient third-person narrators, fixed narrative points of view, and clear-cut moral positions. Faulkner's multiply-narrated stories are an example of this aspect of modernism.

3. A blurring of distinctions between genres, so that poetry seems more documentary (as in T.S. Eliot …) and prose seems more poetic (as in Woolf or Joyce).

4. An emphasis on fragmented forms, discontinuous narratives, and random-seeming collages of different materials.

5. A tendency toward reflexivity, or self-consciousness, about the production of the work of art, so that each piece calls attention to its own status as a production, as something constructed and consumed in particular ways [Mary Klages, 2007].[257]

Postmodernism follows the above phenomenological features of modernism, though seeks certain alternatives to it. "Joyce's Finnegan's wake, for example," comments John Neary and quotes Lodge's words,

257. Klages, Mary, A Guide for the Perplexed (Postmodernism), 2007

"the most extreme of modernist literary imagination, certainly resists interpretation because of "the formidable difficulty of its verbal style and narrative method: nonetheless, says Lodge, we try to read even this supremely difficult modernist novel "in the faith that it is ultimately susceptible of being understood – that we shall, eventually, be able to unpack all the meanings that Joyce put into it, and that these meanings will cohere into a unity." But, Lodge asserts, "postmodernism subverts that faith" [Lodge, 1977 : 226].[258]

The above quoted author – Mary Klages says, " Modernism, for example, tends to present a fragmented view of human subjectivity and history (think of The Wasteland, for instance, or of Woolf's To the Lighthouse), but presents that fragmentation as something tragic, something to be lamented and mourned as a loss. Many modernist works try to uphold the idea that works of art can provide the unity, coherence, and meaning which has been lost in most of modern life; art will do what other human institutions fail to do. Postmodernism, in contrast, doesn't lament the idea of fragmentation, provisionality, or incoherence, but rather celebrates that. The world is meaningless? Let's not pretend that art can make meaning then, let's just play with nonsense" [Klage, 2007]

Metafiction

Metafiction, the term, primarily associated with Modernist and Postmodernist literature is a form of fiction in which the text – either directly or through the characters within – is "aware" that it is a form of fiction – fiction becomes self-conscious. Patrick Waugh offers a brief description of the basic concerns and characteristics of metafiction: "an extreme self-consciousness about language, literary form and the act of writing fictions; a pervasive insecurity about the relationship of fiction to reality; a parodic, playful, excessive or deep, tricky, naïve style of writing" [Waugh, 1984 : 2].[259]

258. Lodge, David, The modes of Modern Writing, 1977
259. Waugh, Patrick, The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction, 1984.

Pastiche

Pastiche is the French version of the Greco-Roman dish, which designated a kind of pie made of many different ingredients. A literary work is called pastiche if it is cobbled together in imitation of several original works. As the Oxford English Dictionary puts it, a pastiche in this sense is "a medley of various ingredients; a hotchpotch, farrago, jumble."

Collage

A **collage** (From the French: *coller*, to glue) is a work of formal art made from an assemblage of different forms, thus creating a new whole.

Simulacrum

The term "simulacrum", which is a relevant concept for literary postmodernism, was introduced by a French cultural theorist, sociologist, and philosopher Jean Baudrillard. His works are frequently associated with postmodernism and post-structuralism. Baudrillard's concept of the "simulacrum" implies the imitation of reality is becoming something "realer than real" in itself. It involves a negation of the concept of reality as we usually understand it. Baudrillard argues that today there is no such thing as reality.

THE SCHOOL

from Sixty Stories by Donald Barthelme

Well, we had all these children out planting trees, see, because we figured that ... that was part of their education, to see how, you know, the root systems ... and also the sense of responsibility, taking care of things, being individually responsible. You know what I mean. And the trees all died. They were orange trees. I don't know why they died, they just died. Something wrong with the soil possibly or maybe the stuff we got from the nursery wasn't the best. We complained about it. So we've got thirty kids there, each kid had his or her own little tree to plant and we've got these thirty dead trees. All these kids looking at these little brown sticks, it was depressing.

It wouldn't have been so bad except that just a couple of weeks before the thing with the trees, the snakes all died. But I think that the snakes – well, the reason that the snakes kicked off was that ... you remember, the boiler was shut off for four days because of the strike, and that was explicable. It was something you could explain to the kids because of the strike. I mean, none of their parents would let them cross the picket line and they knew there was a strike going on and what it meant. So when things got started up again and we found the snakes they weren't too disturbed.

With the herb gardens it was probably a case of overwatering, and at least now they know not to overwater. The children were very conscientious with the herb gardens and some of them probably ... you know, slipped them a little extra water when we weren't looking. Or maybe ... well, I don't like to think about sabotage, although it did occur to us. I mean, it was something that crossed our minds. We were thinking that way probably because before that the gerbils had died, and the white mice had died, and the salamander ... well, now they know not to carry them around in plastic bags.

Of course we expected the tropical fish to die, that was no surprise. Those numbers, you look at them crooked and they're belly-up on the surface. But the lesson plan called for a tropical fish input at that point, there was nothing we could do, it happens every year, you just have to hurry past it.

We weren't even supposed to have a puppy.

We weren't even supposed to have one, it was just a puppy the Murdoch girl found under a Gristede's truck one day and she was afraid the truck would run over it when the driver had finished making his delivery, so she stuck it in her knapsack and brought it to the school with her. So we had this puppy. As soon as I saw the puppy I thought, Oh Christ, I bet it will live for about two weeks and then... And that's what it did. It wasn't supposed to be in the classroom at all, there's some kind of regulation about it, but you can't tell them they can't have a puppy when the puppy is already there, right in front of them, running around on the floor and yap yap yapping. They named it Edgar – that is, they named it after me. They had a lot of fun running after it and yelling, "Here, Edgar! Nice Edgar!" Then they'd laugh like hell. They enjoyed the ambiguity. I enjoyed it myself. I don't mind being kidded. They made a little house for it in the supply closet and all that. I don't know what it died of. Distemper, I guess. It probably hadn't had any shots. I got it out of there before the kids got to school. I checked the supply closet each morning, routinely, because I knew what was going to happen. I gave it to the custodian.

And then there was this Korean orphan that the class adopted through the Help the Children program, all the kids brought in a quarter a month, that was the idea. It was an unfortunate thing, the kid's name was Kim and maybe we adopted him too late or something. The cause of death was not stated in the letter we got, they suggested we adopt another child instead and sent us some interesting case histories, but we didn't have the heart. The class took it pretty hard, they began (I think, nobody ever said anything to me directly) to feel that maybe there was something wrong with the school. But I don't think there's anything wrong with the school, particularly, I've seen better and I've seen worse. It was just a run of bad luck. We had an extraordinary

number of parents passing away, for instance. There were I think two heart attacks and two suicides, one drowning, and four killed together in a car accident. One stroke. And we had the usual heavy mortality rate among the grandparents, or maybe it was heavier this year, it seemed so. And finally the tragedy.

The tragedy occurred when Matthew Wein and Tony Mavrogordo were playing over where they're excavating for the new federal office building. There were all these big wooden beams stacked, you know, at the edge of the excavation. There's a court case coming out of that, the parents are claiming that the beams were poorly stacked. I don't know what's true and what's not. It's been a strange year.

Interpret

According to critics *the School* is a good example of postmodern irony and black humor. They assert that his fundamental skepticism and irony distanced Barthelme from the modernists and they class him as a postmodernist writer.

Does this show in *The School*?

How does the author tell us about the ironic death of plants, animals, and people?

THE BALLOON

By Donald Barthelme

The balloon, beginning at a point on Fourteenth Street, the exact location of which I cannot reveal, expanded northward all one night, while people were sleeping, until it reached the Park. There, I stopped it; at dawn the northernmost edges lay over the Plaza; the free-hanging motion was frivolous and gentle. But experiencing a faint irritation at stopping, even to protect the trees, and seeing no reason the balloon should be allowed to expand upward, over the parts of the city it was already covering, into the "air space" to be found there, I asked the engineers to see to it. This expansion took place throughout the morning, soft imperceptible sighing of gas through the valves. The balloon then covered forty-five blocks north-south and an irregular area east-west, as many as six crosstown blocks on either side of the Avenue in some places. This was the situation, then.

But it is wrong to speak of "situations," implying sets of circumstances leading to some resolution, some escape of tension; there were no situations, simply the balloon hanging there – muted heavy grays and browns for the most part, contrasting with the walnut and soft yellows. A deliberate lack of finish, enhanced by skillful installation, gave the surface a rough, forgotten quality; sliding weights on the inside, carefully adjusted, anchored the great, vari-shaped mass at a number of points. Now we have had a flood of original ideas in all media, works of singular beauty as well as significant milestones in the history of inflation, but at that moment, there was only this balloon, concrete particular, hanging there.

There were reactions. Some people found the balloon "interesting." As a response, this seemed inadequate to the immensity of the balloon, the suddenness of its appearance over the city; on the other hand, in the absence of hysteria or other societally-induced anxiety, it must be judged a calm, "mature" one. There was a certain amount

of initial argumentation about the "meaning" of the balloon; this subsided, because we have learned not to insist on meanings, and they are rarely even looked for now, except in cases involving the simplest, safest phenomena. It was agreed that since the meaning of the balloon could never be known absolutely, extended discussion was pointless, or at least less purposeful than the activities of those who, for example, hung green and blue paper lanterns from the warm gray underside, in certain streets, or seized the occasion to write messages on the surface, announcing their availability for the performance of unnatural acts, or the availability of acquaintances.

Daring children jumped, especially at those points where the balloon hovered close to a building, so that the gap between balloon and building was a matter of a few inches, or points where the balloon actually made contact, exerting an ever-so-slight pressure against the side of a building, so that balloon and building seemed a unity. The upper surface was so structured that a "landscape" was presented, small valleys as well as slight knolls, or mounds; once atop the balloon, a stroll was possible, or even a trip, from one place to the another. There was pleasure in being able to run down an incline, then up the opposing slope, both gently graded, or in making a leap from one side to the other. Bouncing was possible MAKE THIS BIG, because of the pneumaticity of the surface, or even falling, if that was your wish. That all these varied motions, as well as others, were within one's possibilities, in experiencing the "up" side of the balloon, was extremely exciting for children, accustomed to the city's flat, hard skin. But the purpose of the balloon was not to amuse children.

Too, the number of people, children and adults, who took advantage of the opportunities described was not so large as it might have been; a certain timidity, lack of trust in the balloon, was seen. There was, furthermore, some hostility. Because we had hidden the pumps, which fed helium to the interior, and because the surface was so vast that the autorities could not determine the point of entry -- that is, the point at which the gas was injected – a degree of frustration was evidenced by those city officers into whose province such manifestations normally fell. The apparent purposelessness of the balloon was vexing

(as was the fact that it was "there" at all). Had we painted, in great letters, "LABORATORY TESTS PROVE" or "18% MORE EFFECTIVE" on the sides of the balloon, this difficulty would have been circumvented. But I would not bear to do so. On the whole, these officers were remarkably tolerant, considering the dimensions of the anomaly, this tolerance being the result of, first, secret tests conducted by night that convinced them that little or nothing could be done in the way of removing or destroying the balloon, and, secondly, a public warmth that arose (not uncolored by touches of the aforementioned hostility) toward the balloon, from ordinary citizens.

As a single balloon must stand for a lifetime of thinking about balloons, so each citizen expressed, in the attitude he chose, a complex of attitudes. One man might consider that the balloon had to do with the notion sullied, as in the sentence, The big balloon sullied the otherwise clear and radiant Manhattan sky. That is, the balloon was, in each man's view, an imposture, something inferior to the sky that had formerly been there, something interposed between the people and their "sky." But in fact it was January, the sky was dark and ugly; it was not a sky you could look up into, lying on your back in the street, with pleasure, unless pleasure, for you, proceeded from having been threatened, from having been misused. And to the underside of the balloon was a pleasure to look up into, we had seen to that, muted grays and browns for the most part, contrasted with walnut and soft, forgotten yellows. And so, while this man was thinking sullied, still there was an admixture of pleasurable cognition in his thinking, struggling with the original perception.

Another man, on the other hand, might view the balloon as if it were part of a system of unanticipated rewards, as when one's employer walks in and says, "Here, Henry, take this package of money I have wrapped for you, because we have been doing so well in the business here, and I admire the way you bruise the tulips, without which bruising your department would not be a success, or at least not the success that it is." For this man the balloon might be a brilliantly heroic "muscle and pluck" experience, even if an experience poorly understood.

Another man might say, “Without the example of – it is doubtful that – would exist today in its present form,” and find many to agree with him, or to argue with him. Ideas of “bloat” and “float” were introduced, as well as concepts of dream and responsibility. Others engaged in remarkably detailed fantasies having to do with a wish either to lose themselves in the balloon, or to engorge it. The private character of these wishes, of their origins, deeply buried and unknown, was such that they were not much spoken of; yet there is evidence that they were widespread. It was also argued that what was important was what you felt when you stood under the balloon; some people claimed that they felt sheltered, warmed, as never before, while enemies of the balloon felt, or reported feeling, constrained, a “heavy” feeling.

Interpret

What kind of setting, theme, plot structure, and symbolism is offered by Barthleme in Balloon?

Does the story seem nonsensical, absurd, surreal, and ridiculous?

One night an inflated balloon covers nearly the entire southern half of Manhattan. Soon people get used to it and even start using it as a landmark. Some critics argue that this story shows how something alien can be assimilated.

In your opinion, does the balloon stand for something? Can it be a symbol?

What contrast does the balloon make to “dark and ugly January sky”?

How can you interpret the story? Does it resist interpretation?

Linguistic Focus

Is conventional punctuation ignored in the story?

Find the semantically disconnected utterances in the text.

“There was a certain amount of initial argumentation about the

"meaning" of the balloon; this subsided, because we have learned not to insist on meanings, and they are rarely even looked for now, except

in cases involving the simplest, safest phenomena."[260]

In what way does the passage above respond to postmodernism? What attitude does Barthelme reveal through it?

260. POSTMODERN WORLD,POSTMODERN RELATIONSHIPS: THE ARTIST AND SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP IN BARTHELMEÕS FICTION. journal.dogus.edu.tr/13026739/2000/sayi2/M00034

AT THE END OF THE MECHANICAL AGE
by Donald Barthelme

I went to the grocery store to buy some soap. I stood for a long time before the soaps in their attractive boxes, RUB and FAB and TUB and suchlike, I couldn't decide so I closed my eyes and reached out blindly and when I opened my eyes I found her hand in mine.

Her name was Mrs. Davis, she said, and TUB was best for important cleaning experiences, in her opinion. So we went to lunch at a Mexican restaurant which as it happened she owned, she took me into the kitchen and showed me her stacks of handsome beige tortillas and the steam tables which were shiny-brite. I told her I wasn't very good with women and she said it didn't matter, few men were, and that nothing mattered, now that Jake was gone, but I would do as an interim project and sit down and have a Carta Blanca. So I sat down and had a cool Carta Blanca, God was standing in the basement reading the meters to see how much grace had been used up in the month of June. Grace is electricity, science has found, it is not *like* electricity, it *is* electricity and God was down in the basement reading the meters in His blue jump suit with the flashlight stuck in the back pocket.

"The mechanical age is drawing to a close," I said to her.

"Or has already done so," she replied.

"It was a good age," I said. "I was comfortable in it, relatively. Probably I will not enjoy the age to come quite so much. I don't like its look."

"One must be fair. We don't know yet what kind of an age the next one will be. Although I feel in my bones that it will be an age inimical to personal well-being and comfort, and that is what I like, personal well-being and comfort."

"Do you suppose there is something to be done?" I asked her.

"Huddle and cling," said Mrs. Davis. "We can huddle and cling. It will pall, of course, everything palls, in time…"

Then we went back to my house to huddle and cling, most women are two different colors when they remove their clothes especially in summer but Mrs. Davis was all one color, an ocher. She seemed to like huddling and clinging, she stayed for many days. From time to time she checked the restaurant keeping everything shiny-brite and distributing sums of money to the staff, returning with tortillas in sacks, cases of Carta Blanca, buckets of guacamole, but I paid her for it because I didn't want to feel obligated.

There was a song I sang her, a song of great expectations.

"Ralph is coming," I sang, "Ralph is striding in his suit of lights over moons and mountains, over parking lots and fountains, toward your silky side. Ralph is coming, he has a coat of many colors and all major credit cards and he is striding to meet you and culminate your foggy dreams in an explosion of blood and soil, at the end of the mechanical age. Ralph is coming preceded by fifty running men with spears and fifty dancing ladies who are throwing leaf spinach out of little baskets, in his path. Ralph is perfect," I sang, "but he is also full of interesting tragic flaws, and he can drink fifty running men under the table without breaking his stride, and he can have congress with fifty dancing ladies without breaking his stride, even his socks are ironed, so natty is Ralph, but he is also right down in the mud with the rest of us, he markets the mud at high prices for specialized industrial uses and he is striding, striding, striding, toward your waiting heart. Of course you may not like him, some people are awfully picky… Ralph is coming," I sang to her, "he is striding over dappled plains and crazy rivers and he will change your life for the better, probably you will be fainting with glee at the simple touch of his grave gentle grizzled hand although I am aware that some people can't stand prosperity, Ralph is coming, I hear his hoofsteps on the drumhead of history, he is striding as he has been all his life toward you, you, you."

"Yes," Mrs. Davis said, when I had finished singing, "that is what I deserve, all right. But probably I will not get it. And in the meantime, there is you."

God then rained for forty days and forty nights, when the water tore away the front of the house we got into the boat. Mrs. Davis liked

the way I maneuvered the boat off the trailer and out of the garage, she was provoked into a memoir of Jake.

"Jake was a straight-ahead kind of man," she said, "he was simpleminded and that helped him to be the kind of man that he was." She was staring into her Scotch-and-floodwater rather moodily I thought, debris bouncing on the waves all around us but she paid no attention. "That is the type of man I like," she said, "a strong and simpleminded man. The case-study method was not Jake's method, he went right through the middle of the line and never failed to gain yardage, no matter what the game was. He had a lust for life, and life had a lust for him. I was inconsolable when Jake passed away." Mrs. Davis was drinking the Scotch for her nerves, she had no nerves of course, she was nerveless and possibly heartless also but that is another question, gutless she was not, she had a gut and a very pretty one ocher in color but that was another matter. God was standing up to His neck in the raging waters with a smile of incredible beauty on His visage, He seemed to be enjoying His creation, the disaster, the waters all around us were raging louder now, raging like a mighty tractor-trailer tailgating you on the highway.

Then Mrs. Davis sang to me, a song of great expectations.

"Maude is waiting for you," Mrs. Davis sang to me, "Maude is waiting for you in all her seriousness and splendor, under her gilded onion dome, in that city which I cannot name at this time, Maude waits. Maude is what you lack, the profoundest of your lacks. Your every yearn since the first yearn has been a yearn for Maude, only you did not know it until I, your dear friend, pointed it out. She is going to heal your scrappy and generally unsatisfactory life with the balm of her Maudeness, luckiest of dogs, she waits only for you. Let me give you just one instance of Maude's inhuman sagacity. Maude named the tools. It was Maude who though of calling a rattail file a rattail file. It was Maude who christened the needle-nose pliers. Maude named the rasp. Thinks of it. What else could a rasp be but a rasp? Maude in her wisdom went right to the point, and called it rasp. It was Maude who named the maul. Similarly the sledge, the wedge, the ball-peen hammer, the adz, the shim, the hone, the strop. The handsaw, the hacksaw,

the bucksaw, and the fretsaw were named by Maude, peering into each saw and intuiting at once its specialness. The scratch awl, the scuffle hoe, the prick punch and the countersink–I could go on and on. The tools came to Maude, tool by tool in a long respectful line, she gave them their names. The vise. The gimlet. The cold chisel. The reamer, the router, the gouge. The plumb bob. How could she have thought up the rough justice of these wonderful cognomens? Looking languidly at a pair of tin snips, and then deciding to call them tin snips–what a burst of glory! And I haven't even cited the bush hook, the grass snath, or the plumber's snake, or the C-clamp, or the nippers or the scythe. What a tall achievement, naming the tools! And this is just one of Maude's contributions to our worldly estate, there are others. What delights will come crowding," Mrs. Davis sang to me, "delight upon delight, when the epithalamium is ground out by the hundred organ grinders who are Maude's constant attendants, on that good-quality day of her own choosing, which you have desperately desired all your lean life, only you weren't aware of it until I, your dear friend, pointed it out. And Maude is young but not too young," Mrs. Davis sang to me, "she is not too old either, she is just right and she is waiting for you with her tawny limbs and horse sense, when you receive Maude's nod your future and your past will begin."

There was a pause, or pall.

"Is that true," I asked, "that song?"

"It is a metaphor," said Mrs. Davis, "it has metaphorical truth."

"And the end of the mechanical age," I said, "is that a metaphor?"

"The end of the mechanical age," said Mrs. Davis, "is in my judgment an actuality straining to become a metaphor. One must wish it luck, I suppose. One must cheer it on. Intellectual rigor demands that we give these damned metaphors every chance, even if they are inimical to personal well-being and comfort. We have a duty to understand everything, whether we like it or not–a duty I would scant if I could." At that moment the water jumped into the boat and sank us.

At the wedding Mrs. Davis spoke to me kindly.

"Tom," she said, "you are not Ralph, but you are all that is around at the moment. I have taken in the whole horizon with a single sweep

of my practiced eye, no giant figure looms there and that is why I have decided to marry you, temporarily, with Jake gone and an age ending. It will be a marriage of convenience all right, and when Ralph comes, or Maude nods, then our arrangement will automatically self-destruct, like the tinted bubble that it is. You were very kind and considerate, when we were drying out, in the tree, and I appreciated that. That counted for something. Of course kindness and consideration are not what the great songs, the Ralph-song and the Maude-song, promise. They are merely flaky substitutes for the terminal experience. I realize that and want you to realize it. I want to be straight with you. That is one of the most admirable things about me, that I am always straight with people, from the sweet beginning to the bitter end. Now I will return to the big house where my handmaidens will proceed with the robing of the bride."

It was cool in the meadow by the river, the meadow Mrs. Davis had selected for the travesty, I walked over to the tree under which my friend Blackie was standing, he was the best man, in a sense.

"This disgusts me," Blackie said, "this hollow pretense and empty sham and I had to come all the way from Chicago."

God came to the wedding and stood behind a tree with just part of His effulgence showing, I wondered whether He was planning to bless this makeshift construct with His grace, or not. It's hard to imagine what He was thinking of in the beginning when He planned everything that was ever going to happen, planned everything exquisitely right down to the tiniest detail such as what I was thinking at this very moment, my thought about His thought, planned the end of the mechanical age and detailed the new age to follow, and then the bride emerged from the house with her train, all ocher in color and very lovely.

"And do you, Anne," the minister said, "promise to make whatever mutually satisfactory accomodations necessary to reduce tensions and arrive at whatever previously agreed-upon goals both parties have harmoniously set in the appropriate planning sessions?"

"I do," said Mrs. Davis.

"And do you, Thomas, promise to explore all differences thoroughly with patience and inner honesty ignoring no fruitful avenues

of discussion and seeking at all times to achieve rapprochment while eschewing advantage in conflict situations?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, now we are married," said Mrs. Davis, "I think I will retain my present name if you don't mind, I have always been Mrs. Davis and your name is a shade graceless, no offense, dear."

"OK," I said.

Then we received the congratulations and good wishes of the guests, who were mostly employees of the Mexican restaurant, Raul was there and Consuelo, Pedro and Pepe came crowding around with outstretched hands and Blackie came crowding around with outstretched hands, and God was standing behind the caterer's tables looking at the enchiladas and chalupas and chile con queso and chicken mole as if He had never seen such things before but that was hard to believe.

I started to speak to Him as all of the world's great religions with a few exceptions urge, from the heart, I started to say "Lord, Little Father of the Poor, and all that, I was just wondering now that an age, the mechanical age, is ending, and a new age beginning, or so they say, I was just wondering if You could give me a hint, sort of, not a Sign, I'm not asking for a Sign, but just the barest hint as to whether what we have been told about Your nature and our nature is, forgive me and I know how You feel about doubt or rather what we have been told you feel about it, but if You could just let drop the slightest indication as to whether what we have been told is authentic or just a bunch of apocryphal heterodoxy–"

But he had gone away with an insanely beautiful smile on His lighted countenance, gone away to read the meters and get a line on the efficacy of grace in that area, I surmised, I couldn't blame Him, my question had not been so very elegantly put, had I been able to express it mathematically He would have been more interested, maybe, but I have never been able to express anything mathematically.

After the marriage Mrs. Davis explained marriage to me.

Marriage, she said, an institution deeply enmeshed with the mechanical age.

Pairings smiled upon by law were but reifications of the laws of mechanics, inspired by unions of a technical nature, such as nut with bolt, wood with wood screw, aircraft with Plane-Mate.

Permanence or impermanence of the bond a function of (1) materials and (2) technique.

Growth of literacy also a factor, she said.

Growth of illiteracy also.

The center will not hold if it has been spot-welded by an operator whose deepest concern is not with the weld but with his lottery ticket.

God interested only in grace – keeping things humming.

Blackouts, brownouts, temporary dimmings of household illumination all portents not of Divine displeasure but of Divine indifference to executive-development programs at middle-management levels.

He likes to get out into the field Himself, she said. With His flashlight. He is doing the best He can.

We two, she and I, no exception to general flow of world juice and its concomitant psychological effects, she said.

Bitter with the sweet, she said.

After the explanation came the divorce.

"Will you be wanting to contest the divorce?" I asked Mrs. Davis.

"I should think not," she said calmly, "although I suppose on of us should, for the fun of the thing. An uncontested divorce always seems to me contrary to the spirit of divorce."

"That is true," I said, "I have had the same feeling myself, not infrequently."

After the divorce the child was born. We named him A. F. of L. Davis and sent him to that part of Russia where people live to be one hundred and ten years old. He is living there still, probably, growing in wisdom and beauty. Then we shook hands, Mrs. Davis and I, and she set out Ralphward, and I, Maudeward, the glow of hope not yet extinguished, the fear of pall not yet triumphant, standby generators ensuring the flow of grace to all of God's creatures at the end of the mechanical age.

Interpret

Pay attention what attitude is expressed in the following:

"The Mechanical age is drawing to a close," I said to her.

"Or has already done so," she replied.

"It was a good age," I said. "I was comfortable in it, relatively. Probably I will not enjoy the age to come quite so much. I don't like its look."

"One must be fair. We don't know yet what kind of age the next one will be. Although I feel in my bones that it will be an age inimical to personal well being and comfort."

Is the narrator concerned with radical changes taking place in our culture? In what tone is the story written?

Does the story respond to postmodernist tendencies? Which characteristic features of postmodernism does the story reveal? Does it respond to the idea that in the absence of God and in the Absence of belief in God, all the values become arbitrary?

"Lord, Little Father of the Poor, and all that, I was just wondering now that an age, the mechanical age, is ending, and a new age beginning, or so they say, I was just wondering if You could give me a hint, sort of, not a Sign, I'm not asking for a Sign, but just the barest hint as to whether what we have been told about Your nature and our nature is, forgive me and I know how You feel about doubt or rather what we have been told you feel about it, but if You could just let drop the slightest indication as to whether what we have been told is authentic or just a bunch of apocryphal heterodoxy"

How does this "postmodernist prayer" sound?

THE COLLECTOR
John Fowles

John Fowles is an outstanding English writer. He is the author of the popular and critically acclaimed novels The Collector (1963), The French Lieutenant's Woman (1969) (which Karel Reisz made into a successful movie in 1981, starring Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons), The Ebony Tower (1974), and The Maggot (1985).

Critics regard John Fowles as the English-speaking world's greatest contemporary innovative writer and its first postmodern novelist.

About the Collector

The Collector , published in 1963, brought international recognition to John Fowles. Literary critics consider it as a singularly well-written novel, original in its conception and unnervingly acute in its observation of an obsession. This unusual story deals with the relationship between a captor and his prey.

The title character Frederick Clegg, a clerk in a city hall, who collects butterflies in his free time, is obsessed with an upper-class art student named Miranda Grey. One day Clegg wins a large prize in the British football pools, which enables him to buy an isolated house in the countryside. Unable to socialize with the girl he is obsessed with, decides to kidnap her and shut her up in the basement of his isolated countryside house. He hopes that if he keeps Miranda imprisoned, this will make her love him.

Theoretical View of Language and Literature

Metanarrative (from meta-narrative, sometimes also known as a **master-** or **grand narrative**) is a term developed by **a famous** French

philosopher and literary theorist Jean-François Lyotard to mean a theory that tries to give a totalizing, comprehensive account to various historical events, experiences, and social, cultural phenomena based upon the appeal to universal truth or universal values.[261] If we put it plainly, it is a story *about* a story, encompassing and explaining other "little stories" within totalizing schemes. "The narrative function is losing its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements," declares Jean-François Lyotard in his work, *The Postmodern Condition[*Lyotard, 1979]. [262]

Multiple Focalization

According to M.Jahn multiple focalization is a technique of presenting an episode repeatedly, each time seen through the eyes of a different (internal) focalizer, different people tend to perceive or interpret the same event in radically different fashion. Texts that are told by more than one narrator (such as epistolary novels) create multiple focalization based on external focalizers.

Collector is a good example of the multiple focalization.

Genre Identification

Epistolary Novel

Epistola is a Latin word and means a letter. The form of **epistolary novel** is letters, though sometimes, diary entries, newspaper clippings and other documents are used.

Narrative technique in the Collector

The story is told from the characters' point of view. It is narrated in immediate first person. The narration is devoid of emotion and the

261. www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Metanarrative
262. Lyotard, Jean-Francois. The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, 1979.

world depicted is neither friendly nor hostile – in fact a drab place where various events happen. John Fowles presents two narrative streams – one by Clegg and one by his victim, Miranda. Critics note that it is by virtue of this narrative technique that Fowles achieves an opposition of the two points of view which results not only in pointing out the respective motives and goals that can be seen as the determining factors for the specific ways in which those narratives are structured. Both narratives rehearse the same events – both depict from the perspective of an insider the events that are connected to Miranda's abduction. Though as critics comment, both narratives also are diametrically opposed to one another.

Clegg's narration begins with his memories how he used to watch Miranda entering and leaving her house. He describes keeping an "observation diary" about Miranda. From the very beginning of his narration, Klegg reveals himself as a "collector" with obsessed ideas. He watches Miranda for 10 days and as she is walking home alone from a movie, he captures her, using a rag soaked in chloroform, ties her up in his van, takes her to his house, and locks her in the basement. He tries to please Miranda by providing for her immediate needs, even a Mozart record.

The second part of the novel is Miranda's narration, which rehearses the same events from her point of view, but her narration consists of personal insights – it concentrates on the depiction of her feelings and thoughts and less importance is attached to what is happening to her.

The extract presented below is taken from Miranda's's diary, which she secretly kept in her captivity.

October 20th

It's eleven o'clock in the morning.

I've just tried to escape.

What I did was to wait for him to unbolt the door, which opens outwards. Then to push it back as violently as possible. It's only metal-lined on this side, it's made of wood, but it's very heavy. I thought I

might hit him with it and knock him out, if I did it at just the right moment.

So as soon as it began to move back, I gave it the biggest push I could manage. It knocked him back and I rushed out, but of course it depended on his being stunned. And he wasn't at all. He must have taken the force of it on his shoulder, it doesn't swing very smoothly.

At any rate he caught my jumper. For a second there was that other side of him I sense, the violence, hatred, absolute determination not to let me go. So I said, all right, and pulled myself away and went back.

He said, you might have hurt me, that door's very heavy.

I said, every second you keep me here, you hurt me.

I thought pacifists didn't believe in hurting people, he said.

I just shrugged and lit a cigarette. I was trembling.

He did all the usual morning routine in silence. Once he rubbed his shoulder in rather an obvious way. And that was that.

Now I'm going to look properly for loose stones. The tunnel idea. Of course I've looked before, but not really closely, literally stone by stone, from top to bottom of each wall.

It's evening. He's just gone away. He brought me my food. But he's been very silent. Disapproving. I laughed out loud when he went away with the supper-things. He behaves exactly as if I ought to be ashamed.

He won't be caught by the door trick again. There aren't any loose stones. All solidly concreted in. I suppose he thought of that as well as of everything else.

I've spent most of today thinking. About me. What will happen to me? I've never felt the mystery of the future so much as here. What will happen? What will happen?

It's not only now, in this situation. When I get away. What shall I do? I want to marry, I want to have children, I want to prove to myself that all marriages needn't be like D and M's. I know exactly the sort of person I want to marry, someone with a mind like G.P.'s, only much nearer my own age, and with the looks I like. And without his one horrid weakness. But then I want to use my feelings about life.

I don't want to use my skill vainly, for its own sake. But I want to *make* beauty. And marriage and being a mother terrifies me for that reason. Getting sucked down into the house and the house things and the baby-world and the child-world and the cooking-world and the shopping-world. I have a feeling a lazy-cow me would welcome it, would forget what I once wanted to do, and I would just become a Great Female Cabbage. Or I would have to do miserable work like illustrating, or even commercial stuff, to keep the home going. Or turn into a bitchy ginny misery like M (no, I couldn't be like her). Or worst of all be like Caroline, running along pathetically after modern art and modern ideas and never catching up with them because she's someone quite different at heart and yet can never see it.

I think and think down here. I understand things I haven't really thought about before.

Two things. M. I've never really thought of M objectively before, as another person. She's always been my mother I've hated or been ashamed of. Yet of all the lame ducks I've met or heard of, she's the lamest. I've *never* given her enough sympathy. I haven't given her this last year (since I left home) one half of the consideration I've given the beastly creature upstairs just this last week. I feel that I could overwhelm her with love now. Because I haven't felt so sorry for her for years. I've always excused myself – I've said, I'm kind and tolerant with everyone else, she's the one person I can't be like that with, and there has to be an exception to the general rule. So it doesn't matter. But of course that's wrong. She's the last person that should be an exception to the general rule.

Minny and I have so often despised D for putting up with her. We ought to go down on our knees to him.

The other thing I think about is G.P.

When I first met him I told everyone how marvellous he was. Then a reaction set in, I thought I was getting a silly schoolgirl hero-pash on him, and the other thing began to happen. It was all too emotional.

Because he's changed me more than anything or anybody. More than London, more than the Slade.

It's not just that he's seen so much more life. Had so much more artistic experience. And is known. But he says exactly what he thinks, and he always makes *me* think. That's the big thing. He makes me question myself. How many times have I disagreed with him? And then a week later with someone else I find I'm arguing as he would argue. Judging people by his standards.

He's chipped off all (well, some of, anyway) my silliness, my stupid fussy frilly ideas about life and art, and modern art. My feyness. I've never been the same since he told me how he hated fey women. I even learnt the word from him.

List of the ways in which he has altered me. Either directly. Or confirmed alterations in progress.

1. If you are a real artist, you give your whole being to your art. Anything short of that, then you are not an artist. Not what G.P. calls a ''maker''.

2. You don't gush. You don't have little set-pieces or set-ideas you gush out to impress people with.

3. You *have* to be Left politically because the Socialists are the only people who care, for all their mistakes. They *feel,* they want to better the world.

4. You must *make,* always. You *must* act, if you believe something. Talking about acting is like boasting about pictures you're going to paint. The most *terrible* bad form.

5. If you feel something deeply, you're not ashamed to show your feeling.

6. You accept that you are English. You don't pretend that you'd rather be French or Italian or something else. (Piers always talking about his American grandmother.)

7. But you don't compromise with your background. You cut off all the old you that gets in the way of the maker you. If you're suburban (as I realize D and M are – their laughing at suburbia is just a blind), you throw away (cauterize) the suburbs. If you're working class, you cauterize the working class in you. And the same, whatever class you are, because class is primitive and silly.

(It's not only me. Look at that time Louise's boy-friend – the

miner's son from Wales – met him, and how they argued and snarled at each other, and we were all against G.P. for being so contemptuous about working-class people and working-class life. Calling them animals, not human beings. And David Evans, all white and stammering, don't you tell me my father's a bloody animal I've got to kick out of the way, and G.P. saying I've never hurt an animal in my life, you can always make out a case for hurting human beings, but human animals deserve every sympathy. And then David Evans coming up to me last month and actually *admitting* it had changed him, that evening.)

8.You hate the political business of nationality. You hate everything, in politics and art and everything else, that is not genuine and deep and necessary. You don't have any time for silly trivial things. You live seriously. You don't go to silly films, even if you want to; you don't read cheap newspapers; you don't listen to trash on the wireless and the telly; you don't waste time talking about nothing. You *use* your life.

I must have always wanted to believe in those things; I did believe in them in a vague sort of way, before I met him. But he's *made* me believe them; it's the thought of *him* that makes me feel guilty when I break the rules.

If he's made me believe them, that means he's made a large part of the new me.

If I had a fairy godmother – please, make G.P. twenty years younger. And please, make him physically attractive to me.

How he would despise that!

It's odd (and I feel a little guilty) but I have been feeling happier today than at any time since I came here. A feeling – all will turn out for the best. Partly because I did something this morning. I tried to escape. Then, Caliban has accepted it. I mean if he was going to attack me, he'd surely do it at some time when he had a reason to be angry. As he was this morning. He has tremendous self-control, in some ways.

I know I also feel happy because I've been not here for most of the day. I've been mainly thinking about G.P. In his world, not this one here. I remembered so much. I would have liked to write it all down.

I gorged myself on memories. This world makes that world seem so real, so living, so beautiful. Even the sordid parts of it.

And partly, too, it's been a sort of indulging in wicked vanity about myself. remembering things G.P. has said to me, and other people. Knowing I am rather a special person. Knowing I am intelligent, knowing that I am beginning to understand life much better than most people of my age. Even knowing that I shall never be so stupid as to be vain about it, but be grateful, be terribly glad (especially after this) to be alive, to be who I am – Miranda, and unique.

I shall never let anyone see this. Even if it is the truth, it must *sound* vain.

Just as I never never let other girls see that I know I am pretty; nobody knows how I've fallen over myself not to take that unfair advantage. Wandering male eyes, even the nicest, I've snubbed.

Minny: one day when I'd been gushing about her dress when she was going out to a dance. She said, shut up. You're so pretty you don't even have to try.

Analysis and Interpretation

Analyze peculiar syntactic structures and different stylistic devices in the story.

What attitude is expressed about marriage life in the following sentences?

"Getting sucked down into the house and the house things and the baby-world and the child-world and the cooking-world and the shopping-world."

"I have a feeling a lazy-cow me would welcome it, would forget what I once wanted to do, and I would just become a Great Female Cabbage."

How do stylistic devices contribute to forming the idea?

Pay attention to the attitude expressed about ignorance below.

"How I hate ignorance! Caliban's ignorance, my ignorance, the world's ignorance! Oh, I could learn and learn and learn and learn."

Which language devices are used to reinforce the idea?