

Pathogenesis of the impersonal death essay

Law



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Pathogenesis of the Impersonal Death“ That is all this narrator does—stands and looks and hears and smells and all but touches the people of this story.

” Kenneth Payson Kemptom posited the objective narrator of Faulkner’s *A Rose for Emily* as a sort of impervious entity, a peasant-like purveyor rendering the entire apotheosis and unraveling without emphasis or pathos, ‘ it’, devoid of gender and compassion, is language of skin-depth interpretation and above all, of human imperfectitude. The latter, a thematic device deliberated via stream of consciousness and/or first-person narrator fallibility usually purposively probes something more scathingly obvious underlying human awareness. For and from whom is the ‘ *Rose*’ given and taken? Certainly the noun ‘ *rose*’ (if taken literally as a thing itself) appears only adjectivally two times as a “ thin, acrid pall...upon the valance curtains of faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights” at the catastasis of the story, which William T. Going opined as “ the idea of the local curiosity-admiration for Emily with the perverted love-death of the bridal chamber.

” Herein ‘ *curiosity-admiration*’ is remarkable, as it is suggestive that the local giving of the figurative *rose* was merely superficial and somewhat compulsive, ‘ a respectful affection’, death acknowledgement for strangers alike. What is the pathogenesis of such impersonal superficiality and what is its relation to the impervious medium? The medium suggests the implantation of “ more modern ideas” of the next generation, that is “ gross and teeming” with the becoming of ‘ mayors and aldermen’ as a mainspring. Contrastively, Emily Grierson is remarked as “ a body long submerged in motionless water”, who seemed “ dear, tranquil, impervious, skeleton, and inescapable” with a “ vague resemblance to those angels in colored church

windows—sort of tragic and serene”. These words “ motionless” and “ skeleton” serve more than the stylistic settling of tragic tone; Emily Grierson is established as already a senescent, living death somewhat beyond life, dear and angelic yet only in a vaguely conceivable strain. Indeed in retrospect, Emily Grierson’s life had been an indeterminable dying, and physical death would have been an alternative higher ground. The first indicating sign of her deathlike stasis diagnosed perhaps at the death of her Father: *She was dressed as usual and with no trace of grief on her face. She told them that her father was not dead.*

She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body.” Within this moment of restrained grief, the *lain dead* refers not the past but the anguish of the untenable past that refuses to move on, *her father was not dead*, a sensitive quietude of unrequited loss, the progenitor of genuine psychological death that destined to metastasize if neither treated nor cared for. To this the villagers did come, some as susurrating strangers and others as authoritative figures (ministers, doctors). Who would come other? Not offering condolences nor deliberating care, “ resorted to law and force”, boasting further intolerance and apathy “...and could then finally pity her, now “ being left alone, a pauper, she had become humanized”. *Humanized* , as if her sudden urgency of grief and despair in young handicap, *her destiny to die*, amounted only as a humanization and insufficient to salvage save *pity* —and what of the villagers? Would the readers assume liberty to fathom that it is *they* (the readers and villagers) who have become de-humanized,

shielded through inanimate, impassionate words, sharing smells and sights of tragedy and yet could only *pity*? *Poor Emily*.

Indeed the readers can only entertain the extent of grief inherited as a '*noblesse oblige*' (which the old referred to) without connotating the cynicism inherent and yet denoting it by reference. Therein lies the tragedy. Faulkner purposively forbids a human interpretation of the Grierson estate by the imposition of the impervious indices, the countless "*they*" and plural subjects "One of us" "we" that increase in frequency and stridor towards the denouement of the story—The possibility for humanity is left for interpretation of the ill disposition of local handling and cognizance of grief. Faulkner deliberates the necrophilia and desperate outrage of Emily within the purview of lay human understanding (sight and sounds)—its truth staggering: No Southern glory in blood and time, but precisely the fear of blood and time, the inevitable dwindling twilight of human compassion whether in modernity or the past, the impervious pathogenesis of all human misery. Works Cited Kenneth Payson Kempton, "From the Short Story".

The Short Story. Cambridge Harvard University Press (1954). 104-

6William T. Going, "Faulkner's Rose for Emily". Explicator 16 (1958): 27

Insert MLM Reference