

The struggle they
were triumphant in
the biggest



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The story is about Bobby, Jack and Rikki. Bobby is an expert hacker specializing in software while Jack is the same but specializes in hardware.

The story begins in Bobby's loft, the two men huddling together in an attempt to hack into a system that will make them rich beyond their wildest dreams. At the end of their struggle they were triumphant in the biggest score of their young lives but they paid a terrible price for it. Interestingly, they were regular hackers who were content in making money but not more than enough that they will get caught, at the end they wanted to get rich quick because they know that they are getting older and slower but more importantly because they are in-love with the same woman but only Jack knows about it.

Character and Commentary

The main characters: Bobby, Jack and Rikki went through a major change in their personality and in their worldview and how they tried to deal with the sudden transformation of their individual lives. Although they have different backgrounds, Bobby seemed a true-blooded nerd who always loved computers while Jack seems the more adventurous type who happens to also like computers and its ability to make money without going through the rigors of the rat race.

Rikki on the other hand can be compared to a girl who came from the boondocks and content to enjoy life and focused not in the more serious side of life but in how she can buy the things that she believes are important to her. All came from different starting points but they are converging into one goal and one place - they are willing to go deep into cyberspace to make a

great deal of money doing something very risky because they believe that striking it rich is the only way that they can be happy. In their intertwined lives of Bobby, Jack, and Rikki, the author - William Gibson - was given a platform to talk about the problems faced by young men and women who had to deal with the same anxieties and desires as the people of an earlier generation but this time around they had to do it with the advent of new technology that is both difficult and scary to deal with. This is also a reflection of the impact of modern technology to the lives of the young as they grapple with new ways to survive and thrive in a world controlled by things that are very powerful and yet unseen and misunderstood. The characters in the story depicted the kind of lifestyle evident in the post-modern world. Bobby is someone who has great talent and he is able to bend the rules because of that talent and yet he is lost. In the past, society was predictable. Parents would aspire their children to be physicians, lawyers, engineers, accountants, etc.

and the moment this decision was made the children will conform to the dictates of society, partially because they also have the same values and they have the same goals and also partially because they are also afraid of the backlash of rebelling against these norms. In the post-modern world however there are alternative ways to make a great deal of money and there are also alternative ways to gain the respect of people. Bobby, Jack and Rikki may not possess the credentials and the pedigree that would have given them access to Wall Street or some glitzy establishment that will ensure them not only of a fat paycheck but the adoration of the crowd, and yet they have the power to experience the lifestyle of the rich and famous

even if they technically do not possess the means. This is their dilemma; they live in the grey area of society. They are not criminals based on the ancient way of interpreting what a crime is and what is the typical profile of a law breaker. This is because they commit crimes without even leaving their homes and without serious physical exertion except the slight movement of the hands and the fingers to type certain key phrases, keywords and passwords. In the beginning Bobby was the picture of confidence and skill but at the end he was reduced to someone who cannot function without the things that he can use either it is liquor or women. In the beginning Jack was seen as an able partner, an equally talented intrusion specialist like Bobby but as the story progresses the reader sees more and more of his stump, his hand was cut-off some time ago and this has given him an insecurity that is hard to explain but painful nonetheless especially when it comes to his love for Rikki.

At the end of the story the reader witnessed a complete transformation in their lives. Bobby who was supposed to be always in control was revealed to be a person controlled by lust. Jack who at first was seen as a very capable man was slowly seen as a man struggling with a handicap. He was a one-armed man who felt that there are so many things that he cannot do. His love for Rikki was the ultimate proof that he could not live life without Bobby for he will only love the things and the people that Bobby loves.

He ended being with him, used like a crutch, instead of being with the person that he loves and the things that he really wanted to do and accomplish in life.

Human Problem and Human Solution

According to Theodore Sturgeon a science fiction story is built around human beings and therefore the fictionalized narrative with futuristic setting and mind-boggling technology are just there as a backdrop for something that is more important than the material realm; it is just the foundation used to build up a story about a human problem and a human solution. The story “Burning Chrome” is replete with gadgets and technology but these were all just smokescreens because at the heart of the story was the struggle of two men. They knew that they are not going anywhere socially and economically speaking.

It is a struggle faced by many people. There are just so many people out there who cannot move forward and feels like they have no choice but to simply stagnate. There is also the all too familiar conflict between two friends, they complement each other like cookies and cream, like coffee and sugar but they are also so much different.

They use different methods on how to accomplishing things and yet they are also so like-minded that they can finish each others sentences. And finally they are so close that they even ended up loving the same woman. This is the conflict of the story, two people who are inseparable because they create perfect music together and yet circumstances in their lives dictate that they had to part ways. Gibson created a story that is similar to those found in Greek tragedy. Two people, that the audience can consider to be brothers had to destroy each other to realize their dreams and to fulfill their desires, but the woman of their dreams are not even interested in them, she is only

there because of the action, the thrill and the things that she can get from them.

Dealing with the Alien

Another facet of a good fiction story is the element that deals with the alien. It could be an alien planet, an alien being or alien surroundings.

It has been also said that the authors did not really mean to talk specifically about aliens but simply using a metaphor to talk about life. And indeed it is true that in the quest for life, in the journey that everyone has to take he or she will inevitably experience an encounter with the alien. In the case of Bobby and Jack they needed to confront an idea that is very foreign to them and it is the fact that they needed to find another job, to find another source of income. But they are hackers for as long as they can remember and they cannot imagine doing anything different. Nevertheless, the day was fast approaching that they really need to abandon their pirate ways and that fact alone has brought them intense anxiety and foreboding because they could not imagine how to find meaning outside their current world.

Conclusion

It was supposed to be fiction and it was supposed to be about gadgets, technology and the future but it was so much more. The author was simply using everything, the language used, the computers, and the various activities that the characters engaged in to illustrate the complexities of life.

The characters represented humanity and the challenges and pressures that mankind had to deal with in the past decades. The world was radically changed by technology that it now dictates man's way of life. Bobby, Jack,
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and Rikki also illustrated real life problems that include money, love, friendship, boredom, lust, and everything else related to it.

Works Cited

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“ Burning Chrome.” Accessed August 10, 2010. Available from <http://www.wattpad.com/129762-gibson-william-burning-chrome-09-burning-chrome?p=1>