

Our town notes act 3 essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Act 3 our town The stage has been set with three rows of chairs, representing gravestones. At the end of the Intermission, Mrs. Gibbs, Simon Stimson, Mrs. Soames, and Wally Webb, among others, take their seats. All of these characters have died in the Intervening years between Act II and Act III, and the stage has become the local cemetery, situated at the top of a hill overlooking Grover's Corners. The Stage Manager appears and announces that another nine years have passed" it is now the summer of 1913. The Stage Manager talks about the dead, telling us that the dead lose interest in the living and in earthly matters.

He says that " everybody in their bones knows that something is eternal," and that the dead spend their time waiting for this eternal part of their selves to emerge. A few living people have been hovering at the back of the stage and now come to the foreground. The Stage Manager introduces Joe Stoddard, the town's undertaker, who is watching over a freshly dug grave, and Sam Craig, a cousin of Emily Gibbs. We learn that Sam left Grover's Corners twelve years ago to go west and has returned to town for Emily's funeral. Sam reads the headstones, represented by the characters sitting in chairs.

He sees his Aunt Julia, known to us as Mrs. Gibbs, and Mr. Stimson, who, we learn from Joe, hanged himself in his attic. Sam asks Joe how Emily died, and Joe replies that she passed away in childbirth. A funeral party enters with a casket. Among the mourners are George, Dr. Gibbs, and the Webbs. While the living characters huddle at the back of the stage, Mrs. Soames and Mrs. Gibbs talk dispassionately about the cause of Emily's death. Mrs. Soames reminisces about George and Emily's wedding. A group standing by the grave

begins singing “ Blessed Be the Tie That Binds. ” Emily emerges from the funeral party and joins the characters in the cemetery. Her body has just been interred.

She sits in an empty chair beside Mrs. Gibbs and tells her mother-in-law all about the improvements she and George had been making to their farm. Emily suddenly stops, seemingly struck by an epiphany, and looks at Mrs. Gibbs. “ Live people don’t understand,” Emily says. Sitting with the dead, now one of them herself, Emily remarks how distant she feels from the living. Even so, Emily says, she still feels like one of the living, and against the advice of the other dead souls, she decides to go back and relive one happy day from her life. With the assistance of the Stage Manager, Emily goes back to 1899, to the day of her twelfth birthday.

It is dawn, and we witness another typical Grovers Corners morning. As Constable Warren, Howie Newsome, and Joe Crowell, Jr. chat in the street outside Emily’s house, Mrs. Webb comes downstairs to fix breakfast. Mr. Webb has been away in another town for the last few days, but now he returns home with a surprise gift for his daughter. When Mrs. Webb gives the young Emily her presents, however, the scene becomes unbearable for Emily’s deceased soul. Overcome by her observation that human beings go through life without savoring their time on Earth, Emily tells the Stage Manager that she is ready to go back to 1913 and return to the cemetery.

Emily again takes her place next to Mrs. Gibbs. The dead talk and watch the stars come out over her grave. Simon Stimson angrily replies that Emily now understands how the living waste time, trampling on the feelings

of others and existing in a self-centered world of “ignorance and blindness.” Mrs. Gibbs defends the living, telling Simon that he has not told Emily the whole truth. Still contemplating the stars, one man among the dead recalls his son telling him that starlight takes millions of years to travel to the Earth from its source.

George appears and, overcome with grief, throws himself down in front of Emily's grave, prompting several disapproving comments from the dead souls. As Emily watches her husband lie prostrate on the ground, she asks Mrs. Gibbs, “They don't understand, do they?” The Stage Manager reappears and draws a dark curtain across the stage. He offers a few closing remarks about Grover's Corners as it settles down for the night. Looking at the stars, he says that the Earth may be the only place in the universe where life exists. Winding his watch, he ends the play by telling the audience to go home and get some good rest.