

The lake in the woods by tim obrien

Literature



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With this O'Brien builds mystery and fear, the lake brings a warning to the reader that something is going wrong or might go wrong while the couple settles in the cottage by the lake. Vietnam, on the other hand, is described as full of mud, mines, and maze. This depicts clearly a view that this is a place of danger. John's traumatic experiences in the Vietnam War, particularly the My Lai massacre, is a proof that he has deep inner conflicts and guilt that plagues his mind resulting not only to a crack in his psychological fitness but also deepens the gap between him and his wife. Situating the story back and forth the primary settings while inserting settings of the civilized and modern world in the form of the university campus in Minnesota, Minneapolis-St Paul and Las Vegas symbolize the contrast between reality and delusions. This created an impact on the reader that both Vietnam and the lake symbolizes horror and secrets, both of which can destroy a person and his relationship with other people. This, in fact, is what happened with John and Kathy's marriage. It has been destroyed by the secrets of both. It may seem that the settings symbolized the main characters, Vietnam for John and the lake for Kathy. The mystery and secrets behind Vietnam and the lake both resulted in their destruction.