

# Humbert humbert in lolita essay sample



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Meet Humbert Humbert, Vladimir Nabokov's shocking and astounding pedophilic protagonist. He causes the death of his twelve-year-old lover's mother, and then lies about her "injury" in order to kidnap his "nymphet" and journey across the Continental United States. What could be more disturbing? The fact that, in the end, we love H. Humbert! In his book *Lolita* Nabokov has effectively accomplished the task of writing as his character, allowing Humbert to deepen tremendously and enhance his audience's experience of Humbert's tragic love for Dolores Haze.

I find that Humbert is one of the only truly believable literary figures, and that Nabokov's convincing novel is well written because he wrote it as Humbert Humbert. Thus, Mr. Humbert is an entirely believable character that is deepened with the development of his inner monologues and thoughts, his actions, and his pure love for Dolores Haze.

As *Lolita* is written as H. Humbert's memoir, Nabokov has written as his character. One way that this enhances his writing is in the development of his inner monologue. Throughout the novel, Humbert's thoughts are prevalent. With these delicately written sections, Nabokov has established that Humbert's mind may be hanging just near the boundaries of reality. His mind is quite colorful and he often describes what he is seeing with metaphor. A prime example of this comes directly after Charlotte Haze discovers Humbert's love letters about her daughter (and his step-daughter).

These were stashed in a locked table, what she broke into to find his dirty secret. Post break-in, Humbert "[surveys] from the threshold the raped little table with its open drawer, a key hanging from the lock," (p. 96). This image

literally describes the break-in as a “rape,” but at the same time, he views this intrusion as a rape of his privacy. Lolita is riddled with these double-meaning metaphors, suggesting that Humbert views the world through the eyes of metaphor. Nabokov’s connection of writing style and character development delve deep into the mind of Humbert Humbert.

A second point where the writing smoothly weaves with character is that of the general plot and Humbert’s actions throughout the novel. As stated hitherto, Humbert is detached from reality. He wholly believes that his Lolita truly loves him. Obviously, this is why he kidnaps her. Nabokov displays Humbert as a bit of a romantic, and his overall plan for his and Delores’ relationship displays this, he thinks he can sweep her off her feet and carry her off into the wild blue yonder (the West). His romantic qualities prompt him to protect his love. His actions in this category bring him to murder Clare Quilty.

This entire scene deepens his character to show how far Humbert will go to protect his Lolita. In his oral death poem to Quilty, Humbert describes himself as Lolita’s “wax-browed and dignified protector,” (p. 300).

Humbert’s poem along with the murder of Quilty (killed because he had tried to exploit Delored’ body in his child pornography) show that Humbert’s mind is clouded and that he is clearly losing his mind. Therefore, Humbert’s actions only add to his depth and his character arc.’

Humbert’s love for Delored Haze is perhaps the most intriguing and well-established idea in the book. Nabokov does many things to prove that H. H. loves Lolita. First of all, the first and last words of the “Lolita.” This motif

suggests that, because it is a memoir of his life, Lolita was the major influence in his life. It shows that his entire life was but a prelude to his chance love with Delores Haze. Also, building on this, the novel opens with a blunt statement that describes what Lolita meant to him: “ Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins.

My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta,” (p. 1). The final lines of Lolita bluntly revisit his love for this beloved nymphet once again: “ I am thinking of aurochs and angels, the secret of durable pigments, prophetic sonnets, the refuge of art. And this is the only immortality you and I may share, my Lolita,” (p. 309). Again, he expresses his love as a deeply emotional thing. The next most important representation of this idea is found in his poem to Quilty discussed hitherto. In the novel, the poem is quite a lengthy profession as to why Clare Quilty deserves to die. When summarized, this is because he literally stole Lolita away from him and tried to place her in the child porn industry. He describes this wonderfully in the last section of the poem:

...spitting into [my] flavid toga and at dawn

leaving the hog to roll upon his new discomfort

the awfulness of love and violets

remorse despair while you

took a doll to pieces

and threw its head away

because of all you did

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because of all I did not

you have to die. (p. 300)

Humbert is telling Quilty that he killed his relationship with Lolita and that, in turn, Quilty deserves to be killed. In these two examples, Nabokov has already proved that Humbert's is, indeed, true. In fact, this may be "the only convincing love story of our century," (Vanity Fair."

Nabokov has created a fully believable and multi-faceted brilliant character. He has developed Humbert by accentuating his inner thoughts, plotting out his actions superbly, and fully exploring Humbert's love for Lolita. The author handles the subject intelligently, brilliantly, writing as Humbert. One of the best-written novels of the century, Nabokov's *Lolita* is a stunning, provocative, and thought-provoking novel that is, at the same time, a strikingly tragic love story between a lovable pedophile and his twelve-year-old nymphet.