

Developing surprise in the interlopers

Life



Introduction

Imagine how uneventful a book would be without some type of suspense or surprise. How is it possible for authors to ensure they create such responses from their audience? The British fiction writer Hector Hugh Munro, also known by his pen name “ Saki”, was known for featuring surprise endings in his narratives. Authors tend to use structural elements of suspense and literary devices together to create an effective surprise ending. Saki utilizes suspense, textual structure, and pacing to develop the element of surprise in his narrative “ The Interlopers”.

Suspence

Saki implements suspense to cause a surprising response from the readers of “ The Interlopers”. Saki does this best by the verbal conflicts in the plot. In the story, the main characters are bickering and almost threatening each other over what their men will do to them when they arrive to release them from under the tree. In paragraph 7 the character Ulrich states, “ When my men come to release us you will wish, perhaps, that you were in a better plight than caught poaching on a neighbor’s land, shame on you.” In this quote, Saki can create suspense because it shows the extremity of the character’s conflict. In paragraph 7 the other character Georg states, “ I have men, too, in the forest tonight, close behind me, and THEY will be here first... it won’t need much clumsiness on their part to roll this mass of trunk right over on the top of you.” These two quotes create suspense in the text because of how unsure it makes the audience of what may happen next. This further assists in the effectiveness of the surprise ending.

Textual Structure

Saki also uses textual structure in the text “ The Interlopers” to develop the element of surprise. Saki’s story has a narrative structure which means that it is a literary element that uses a structural framework to present the plot and setting of a narrative.

Pacing

Saki lastly utilizes pacing to surprise the readers of “ The Interlopers”. Pacing is moving a story at a certain speed. Saki uses fast pacing when both men are trying to figure out who is approaching. The dialogue in paragraph 28 states, “” They are making all the speed they can, brave lads,’ said Ulrich gladly. ‘ Are they your men?’ asked Georg. ‘ Are they your men?’” In this quote, the characters are using rapid dialogue when trying to communicate about whose men are approaching. This fast pacing creates an anxious emotion in the reader. This then can lead to a more effective surprise ending.

Conclusion

In the end, Saki best uses suspense, textual structure, and pacing to produce a surprise ending in his narrative “ The Interlopers”. If the audience is always able to detect what will happen in a narrative then the story can lose its impact. Sometimes leaving the audience to envision the story as something different.