

# Oscar wao discussion essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

It's kind of a sad and scary symbolism especially when it got to the part that Oscar thinks that the faceless man he saw was joining his beating down. Maybe that's a representation Of how other citizens started to concede to Tortilla's rule and hurt others just to protect themselves. Next, personally, think the mongoose represents the anti-fug; of the De Leone because it always shows up in times of need. But then thought, hey that's not a symbol! And so, I started to think it actually represents them, the De Leone. Somehow.

Just don't know how. Well, we know that like the De Leone, mongooses are foreign and not native. That's one similarity already and I'm pretty sure there are a lot more! So yes I will firmly stand on my belief that the mongoose represents Scar's family.

The most interesting symbolism that I encountered, though, is the blank page. The first time I saw it, felt confused because I just can't understand what it's supposed to mean. I dismissed the thought but then it appeared again so I decided to really think about it and I ended up with just one explanation: it was a blank page because it is up to the readers how they would think of it. And I think that's pure genius! Next up: the themes.

I picked up many themes but chose to focus on the following: politics, supernatural beings, feminism, and, of course, love. The book contained a lot of politics. It kept on mentioning the Trujillo era and its effect on the people of Santos Domingo.

When I was in high school, was taught that the theme should always be expressed in a sentence. So, in a sentence, one theme I incurred from this

book is this: Politics is messy. That's probably a known fact, especially here in the Philippines, but I have to say it.

People who never experienced a time of great political struggle, like me, will have a hard time grasping what really happened during those "dark times" in the country, but this book helped me get some insights of it. I know I've been hearing stories about the messy politics here but never had heard or seen such a detailed narration about it. The book is not exactly satirical, but I think Ditz is really good for being able to incorporate a government criticism in his work. Another theme that took my attention was the presence of some supernatural beings.

It's emphasized over and over, the family has a curse. And like I said earlier, there was this recurring image of a man with no face and the mongoose. Personally, this theme creeps me out.

(Here's a story: after reading the introduction part, my laptop broke and, believe in or not, I blamed the fug;! For days I tried to find ways of writing this paper without actually reading the book just because I was scared of that if". Anyway, yeah. It just creeps me out). I think, though, that it was nice to put in some folklore in the story because it supports the setting, but also think that the bad luck of the De Leans should not be attributed to supernatural stuff. Theme number three: Women can. I absolutely love this theme. From the story, all the ladies had a hard time but still stood strong to overcome it. As a RL, I just love how uplifting that is.

Although it may seem like some women weren't as achieved as others (yup, I'm talking about Yup!n), each of them had a strength that was very much

highlighted. (washrag go girls, washrag femme fatal) Finally, the theme that almost every story has: love. In a sentence: love endures all. Oscar, Lola, Ballard, and Bell all had to sacrifice for the ones they love. They all had to give up their happiness, their safety, and everything else they have because of love and out of love.

Its an amazing theme, and I dare say, it will never get old. The last element that would discuss is narration. It's the one I would discuss had I been forced to pick just one because find it quite interesting although I actually hated it. The point of view of the story is third person limited omniscient, but what's more interesting about it is who the narrator is.

So when I realized that the narrator is Honor, I thought the name sounded familiar so I decided to look it up. I found out that Honor was, in fact, the protagonist in another book of Junco Ditz that I have already read and was also a character in his first novel. So, in a nutshell, Honor is a recurring character in every book of Ditz. Knowing these, came to conclude hat Honor is actually the alter-ego of Ditz! Interesting, right? Although it was quite hard to know if it was Honor or the author speaking, I think the story couldn't have been narrated decently in any other way. In summary, I think every element of this story is relevant, great, and well-thought Of. After all, it won a Pulitzer for crying out loud! II. Personal Reflection and Reaction Personally, I have reserved feelings for this book. Partially because I have already read one of Junco Diets book (and didn't like it), and partially because was stressed at the time and was exasperated to see how long it actually is.

It's not like it's the best book I've ever read or something, but I have to say that, in summary, reading it was actually worth it. I'm going to do this negative-positive approach so before I go over the reasons for my liking it, I want to say the things I didn't like first. The only thing that I absolutely despised (because others, merely not like) is Dais's unending use of Spanish words and phrases.

I used Ditz, not the author or anything else, because I am saying this as a person who has read two of his books. I swear, he uses Spanish a lot. And get it! He's from Santos Domingo and all, but not everyone speaks A LOT of Spanish. Sure, understand high, amoral, and some basic words, but that's it! Does he really think that all of his readers understand this? Does he think his readers will find time to put the book down in the midst of a really great story just to use Google translate and find out what those words mean? Wow, I'm surprised with this sudden outburst of my emotions. Some critics would probably say that the use of Spanish words just made it more natural, more in setting and in theme; I'm no professional critic so I'm probably wrong but have to say it's better off without it. Another thing I didn't like was the narration. It was good, all right, but feel like it's shifting from the author to the narrator every now and then.

And it didn't help that he suddenly just adds notes in the footer. And speaking of footers, the man knows how to use one, why didn't he use it to put translations of those goddamn Spanish words! Any. Bay, going back to the shift...That probably is his style, so I don't hate it very much. I just don't like feeling confused is all.

Oh, and one more thing that I didn't like was the ending. To me it felt a bit rushed. I think if Ditz ended it with " All We ever talk about is Oscar" there will be a greater impact. But then again, the ending was quite funny also. (But please imagine if it actually ended with the line I suggested. I mean okay Honor still gets to reveal what's in Scar's diary but then it will be like in a conversation of him and Lola and then he says " Well that's it for us. All we ever talk about is Oscar. " Bam! ) But okay, I'll call quits on this one.

Now on to the good things! I started the negative comments strongly, but here, I'm starting small so I have a solid end. Like I said earlier, I had some reservations for the book because of the author, so when was starting with it, all I could think of was how boring and ragging it is. What got me out of this first impression trance, you ask? Simple! It's a line, and I quote, " dude wore his nerviness like a Jed wore his light saber. " Being a Star Wars fan, was just so happy to see that reference. Subsequently, I was also so happy to see all the nerd slash comic book slash Marvel references that followed. As a fan of those things, I personally think it spiced up the book.

I also liked Lola. And by that mean like the portrayal of her character. Among all the narrations, the narration of her life was the one that really got me. Have this (not weird at all) fascination with independent people, and I eke how Lola just marches to the beat of her own drum all the time. I also like that despite her liberty, she still chooses and remains to be a very loving and caring sister to Oscar. Lets just say that those characteristics are the ones really really want to acquire for myself. Despite my hating of the consistent use of Spanish, I like the setting of the Story. I think it is quite vital because,

well, obviously it wouldn't be the same without the Trujillo era and all that and also because it felt somehow relevant to me as a Filipino.

I bet you already know what I'm talking about: like Santos Domingo, the Philippines was also invaded by the Spaniards and spoke Spanish quite well during the early days. And of course let's not forget the most perfect similarity of the two countries: dictatorship era. Where there is Trujillo in the DRY (the DRY, isn't that how the author calls it? ), there is Marco's in the Philippines.

One of the book's appeal to me was the stories about dictatorship because I've heard a lot of those stories here, too. I think because of that resemblance found the story factual and, in fact, possible and real. I've already read a book (Everything Is Illuminated by Jonathan Safran Foer) that kind of has the same attack in the story. It was, like this one, a story about the past, present, and future of one family. Like that book, this was kind of hard to comprehend too, but have to say that I like the presentation of this one better. Think I have to attribute it to Dais's writing style, really.

He doesn't use incomprehensible words (but he uses a lot of Spanish but I've decided to move on with that so I'm putting this comment inside a parenthesis) and it's just chill. Like, you can relax to it, you know, just pick it up and read it on your spare time kind of thing. And those are the books that even, the deep ones presented in an easy manner (eg: The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger).

I also surprisingly love the story. I mean, I was quite curious about it. The use of those many symbolisms was interesting, so are the seemingly recurring events.

It's also nice because every part of the story had its meaning. I mean, it's like there are no buffer pages. Every page is important; miss one and you'll be lost. Finally, after digesting it, I recognized what I love most about the book. I looked back on what read and realized that despite its title, half of the story wasn't even about Oscar! But it was about Oscar! Do you see what mean?