

Example of grief essay

[Science](#), [Geology](#)



Book review; ‘ Grief’

As the title suggests the excerpt revolves around grief. Grief is a situation of deep sorrow and devastation, which may come from loss. This loss takes different forms; it could be loss of a relative, friend or colleague through death and failure to accomplish goals among others. Despite the many sources of grief, there is always one big characteristic of grief-sadness befalls. Joan Didion explores the nature of grief and mourning as she borrows a lot from personal life experience. The author of this passage tries to cope with the death of her husband . She displays how grief can be devastating to an extent of affecting our normal functioning. As Didion asserts, no one anticipates grief and we never know how it tastes until it occurs. We live in a world where disaster including death is up-close. As she quotes, “ Grief turns out to be a place none of us know until we reach it. We anticipate (we know) that someone close to us could die, but we do not look beyond the few days or weeks that immediately follow such an imagined death. We might expect that we will be prostrate, inconsolable, and crazy with loss. We do not expect to be literally crazy, cool customers who believe that their husband is about to return and need his shoes.” Didion informs herself to the grieving and mourning process as much as possible but ultimately finds out that at the end of the same year, she is still a victim of shock and faking the impression of normal functioning individual rather really being one. Throughout the excerpt she encounters the mourning process day in day out , paddling through memories of her late husband and “ vortex effects” of remembrance of sweet times with John(his late husband), that continuously threaten to enervate her. There are a myriad of real life experiences that can attest to

the above experience. People do not expect disaster or death to hit. Grief is not planned but just happens just as none of the Americans expected the disaster that happened on 9/11. However all what every individual knows is that one day grief will hit. As Didion observes, there is a big difference between grief as we picture and how it is in reality. We do not imagine shock from grief as something that has the ability to dislocate our own minds and body until it occurs. When we imagine of grief we ought to persuade ourselves that we can afford the strength to maintain our cool when it occurs. In the world of imagination, no one has ever encountered this real side of grief; shock from grief is inconsolable, prostrate and render us crazy with loss. There is the common notion that a certain hypothetical healing occurs after a grieving event occurs. For instance, as Didion looks at it, we are inclined to think that funeral is the peak of grief in case of death . However, there is a certain unimagined deep and devastating grief that in simple language can be termed as the “ aftermath of loss to death. “ Joan’s experience is a testament of how the aftershock of death can be shattering. As Didion points out, a period of unrelenting void and absence follows, exacerbated by flashbacks, and past of memories of the fallen person. The knowledge that someone close to us will die at one point or the other in our lives bring to fore our anticipation of grief. However as Didion explains, one does not really know grief until they are struck by it. The anticipation that someone close to her might die did not stop her from grieving after John’s demise. Her disillusion with life in general and her quest to seek meaning in life both in her family life and in her profession as a geologist is expressed in the passage where she ponders over the meaninglessness of

life. Her life is portrayed as continuous journey seeking meaning in all levels of her existence, this is attested to by her assertion that she found meaning to the endless motions of child nurturing such as cooking. The passage gives a distinctive insight into Joan Didion's personal life. Her private thoughts and emotions are exhibited. She has difficulty accepting her husband's death. She is clearly reminiscent of the times they used to share and captures this in by recalling the house they used to live in and the day they brought home their daughter as baby. Her reminiscence of the swimming they used to enjoy in the cave and how she imagined her death by the collapsing of the cave around her is an example of her anticipating death. She creates a situation where the landslide could have occurred with them in the water thereby killing her. Her selective anticipation informed by her occupation with geology, she rules out a cardiac arrest at the dinner table for a more relatable converging of her two worlds for the final time through death by geological devices. Geology and her personal life as a wife and a mother are totally independent of each other but she constantly searches meaning in both. These parallels never converged but occasionally did in the event of earthquakes for example where a direct geological affected her life. She fails to see meaning in life with her loss of her husband. Her anticipation of grief does not shield her from experiencing it as she states, ' Grief turns out to be a place none of us know until we reach it. We anticipate (we know) that someone close to us could die, but we do not look beyond the few days or weeks that immediately follow such an imagined death. We misconstrue the nature of even those few days or weeks'

In the excerpt the statement ' no eye was on the sparrow, no one was

watching me', aptly captures the aspect of the world never changing. The existence of the world was to her independent to her grief and offered no respite to her individual sorrow. To her the world was ever going to be the same things were bound to repeat themselves over and over in history. She reckons that her situation is not unique but a replication of an occurrence that happens in every part of the world.

This passage offers an insightful look into the view of grief from a person afflicted by it. Didion does a great service to the passage by offering this insight from her personal sorrow following the demise of her husband. Her reflections on how she handles grief and her perceptions on life offer great insights on how to handle grief.