

Free essay on the god of dark laughter

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Chabon's "The God of Dark Laughter" is an unusual story with an interesting theme. The use of first person allows readers to become close to the narrator and want to keep reading. However, the author's choice of methods through which to deliver information to the reader are a little too obvious. Although the theme and premise of the story are good, the writing does not do them justice.

"The God of Dark Laughter" is a short story centred around coulrophobia, which is an irrational fear or dislike of clowns. Very early on in the narrative, we learn that a clown has been found murdered in a forest. The overall theme is the absurd nature of the world that is, as the narrator of the story says, like "an ungettable joke" (Chabon). The message that not everything can be explained or rationalised is a powerful one and Chabon moulds his short story around it effectively.

The story is told in first person narrative, from the point of view of one of the detectives on a murder case in which the victim was a clown. The choice to write the story in first person narrative was a good one as it gave the piece the feel, in some respects, of a crime scene report. First person allows the reader to become close to the narrator and to get to know him in depth. This certainly comes across in this story; the reader is aware of his thoughts and is even allowed to witness the narrator's dreams.

There are several settings within the story, none of which are particularly memorable. However, some of the images described within the piece are powerful enough to stay in the reader's mind, long after they have finished reading. For example, the image of the dead clown is described well; this is especially useful as it is the central image of the story. Furthermore, the

circus baboon is well described and is another unusual image that will stay with the reader.

Although an interesting and gripping short story, it could be argued that Chabon has used several tools to convey information that may be a little too transparent for some readers. For example, the narrator learns a great deal of information simply by reading some books that were found in the clown's cave. Furthermore, the narrator explains in detail a dream he has and how it relates to the case of the dead clown. Both of these examples could be viewed as easy ways to push information onto the reader, and may put some people off the story. So although the theme is a fascinating one, the way in which it is delivered fails to have the same intellect.

“The God of Dark Laughter” is an enjoyable story, for the most part. The protagonist and narrator is likeable and seems trustworthy, and there is a very strong central image to the story: that of the dead clown. However, in terms of story delivery, Chabon made some choices that will not appeal to every reader, such as using second-hand reading and dreams, to give information to the audience. Having said this, no writing style appeals to everyone, and it is possible that Chabon's decisions within this story are popular with people with whom other styles are not.