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Essay on the Book “ Holes”

Holes

“ Holes” is a novel written by Louis Sachar published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in 1998. The novel won the award for United States National Award for Young People Literature in 1998. The novel also won the most distinguished contribution to the American literature for Children award “ Newberry Medal” in 1999. Later, Walt Disney Pictures filmed the book in 2003.

The story of the movie revolves around the boy, Stanley Yalnats, who is from a poor family. The family is cursed due to the grand grandfather’s stealing a pig. Police wrongly accuses Stanley for stealing a pair of shoes and sends him to Camp Green Lake, a correction facility in the middle of a desert.

Stanley develops friendship with Zero, another young boy. At the camp, the inmates daily dig cylindrical holes and Zero is best at digging. Zero runs away, and Stanley follows him; they both reach to the mountain and discover a field of onions. They both come back to the camp and start digging holes as usual. They find a suitcase with Stanley Yalnats written on it that belong to Stanley grand grandfather. Attorney arrives and takes both Stanley and Zero back home. Curse no more bothers the Stanley’s family. Camp Green Lake closes down and turns into a girls’ scout camp.

There are quite a few characters in the book and have their own significance.

Few of them are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs:-

- Zero. Hector Zeroni is called Zero at the camp due to his thick headedness. He is considered as a stupid boy by other inmates and the counselor. He did not have a house since his childhood when her mother abandoned him. He

does not have any education and cannot read or write even the alphabets. Zero has had a tough life, but he is strong enough to stand for himself. He is smart and despite being the smallest in size at the camp, he is the best digger. He does not speak much and just walks around in the camp with a bad look on the face. He becomes the friend with Stanley and agree to help Stanley in digging his hole in return to Stanley's help for his education. He is quiet most of the times and does not like questions and people who make fun of him. Due to the hardships suffered in his life, Zero runs away from the camp and hides himself in an ancient boat. He survives there till the time Stanley makes it to him the next day. He offers his last bottle of food to Stanley. He is an honest boy who stole things from the street only to survive. He intentionally did not steal costly things from the neighborhood so as not to cause heavy losses to the people. He apologizes to Stanley for stealing the pair of shoes for which Stanley was undergoing prison.

- Stanley the Caveman. A young boy with a lot of bad luck who is convicted of a crime wrongly and sent to the detention center at Camp Green Lake. Stanley appears to be the hero of the book but he is not. He is a little overweight boy who is not very social in school and is often a source of fun for his schoolmates. He had a tough time both at school and the camp. He had a bad luck associated with his family due to his grand grandfather's sin. His family is not rich, but they try to remain hopeful, positive and look towards the positive side of life. Stanley does not have much of self-confidence, but he has the traits of his family, therefore, does not easily get depressed. Strength of his character does not let him submit at the Camp, and he continues to develop his personal and physical strength. " His

muscles and hands weren't the only parts of his body that had toughened over the past several weeks. His heart had hardened as well." The statement tells about the development of his strength at the Camp Green Lake. At the Camp, he tries to avoid problems and stands up for himself and his friends. His friendship with Zero moulds the events, in a way, that lifts the curse from his family. Despite knowing that he was sent to the camp due to the crime committed by Zero, he continues his friendship with the Zero and takes him along from the camp to his home.

- X-ray. He is the head boy in the Tent-D of the Camp Green Lake. He gives a name to the Stanley " the caveman" and orders the line and the sequence when it is time to take water from a bowser. He is a small boy and cannot see without glasses but still commands the tent. He convinces Stanley to give him the gold tube in order to have a day off. He stands up for Stanley when other boys want to be funny with him as a reward for the favors that Stanley does to him. After Stanley and Zero become friends, he feels threatened and becomes hostile to Stanley. X-ray feels jealous of both Zero and Stanley and does not congratulate them on their release from the camp.

- Catherine Barlow, The Kissing Cat Barlow. She is a white lady of the past who fell in love with an onion seller a century ago. She is a teacher in one room school in a place now called Camp Green Lake. She likes Sam, a black for his smartness and for being strong. People of the area do not like blacks getting education, but she is not a racist and allows everyone to join the school. She kisses the Sam one day. When the people of the village come to know about this, they kill Sam as a white lady kisses him. Catherine Barlow

becomes revengeful and starts killing those responsible for the death of the Sam. She became the sign of fear and known to be the Kissing Cat Barlow as she leaves a sign of the kiss with the dead body. In the book she appears to be cruel but she is unlucky and just the human.

Reference

Sachar, Louis. (1998). Holes