

# My analysis of "the lottery" by shirley jackson

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



The story begins in a small village location unknown with a population of just over 300 civilians. The people of this town prepare themselves for an annually on June 27th for a Lottery. This is one lottery that will certainly leave you stoned in the end.

In what seems to be a typical small town the locals gather together for an annual Lottery. Initially when reading through the first few lines I immediately noticed several grammatical errors and found that to be the same throughout this story. For example June 2th, doesn't even exist. Yet the Narrator depicts it as an actual date. While it took this particular town only two hours to complete the entire procession which begin at 10 O'clock, and finished up in time to get home for noon dinner. Dinner at noon? I found to be very odd and questioned the mind frame of these civilians. I wonder if since the surrounding villages had a larger population so much that it took two days if more than one person was selected for the lottery in those area. With School recently being released, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them this was very surprising as children are normally overly excited for summer to begin, and is also an indicator of what was yet to come. The foreshadowing: of the Bobby Martin stuffing his pockets with stones, and the other boys soon following the example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones. Admittedly I did initially think the boys might be skipping stones across a pond or something of that sort. Until eventually made a great pile of stones in the corner and they were guarding it lead me to believe that more than a stone skipping competition was taking place and it began to sound more like a possible battle between them. The mention of

the girls looking over their shoulders, at rolled in the dust or clung No indication who the girls were looking at, but it does represent fear in them.

The assembling of families begins, and at this point the parents have come to survey their children, accounting for each one of their family. The men all gathered together in wait, preparing for the rest of the town members to arrive including their wives. Seeing that the men stood together away from the stones having known what the stones were for, showed that there was a bit of intimidation in them, as was with the children with what could be their fate at some point in that day. As the wives of the men soon got in the respectful places, at the side of their husbands, they made attempts to round up their children and they obliged reluctantly, with the exception of one child in particular (Bobby Martin). Who I believe would've plum run away if he had any sense of direction, or didn't fear getting a spanking once apprehended by his dad.

Mr. Summers who was the conductor of this lottery, and all the other social events that took place in the local town. He was a local celebrity of sorts and would be one who despite such consequences, would be willing to keep such a heinous tradition alive. Considering that he had no children, and his wife was a scold other than his business he didn't seem to have very much going for him. So for him being the conductor of this annual event, to me gave him a level of control considering he didn't otherwise have. I also believe that as the conductor, although he went through the motion in following suite with the rest of the village. He is never really in the running of being chosen for the lottery. The narrator also noted that carrying the black wooden box

which sounds precisely like that of a coffin. Somehow the feeling or enjoyment of death rest with Mr. Summers (which means one who drove pack horses or mules) this immediately strikes the thought of a funeral procession (horse and buggy). The atmosphere of death is becoming more apparent. Mr. Graves, the last name speaks for itself. Assist Mr. Summers carrying the stool that this black box would come to rest upon for the drawing in this lottery. Which the villagers took very little comfort in being around.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago led me to believe that some brave soul took it upon themselves to get rid of or destroy the previous box and Mr. Summers frequently spoke to the villagers about making a new box thereby still desiring to have that control over the fate of others. No one wanted to build a new box that could potentially take either them or one of their family members out of existence, which is also an indicator that maybe the villagers wanted to do away with this traditional ritual. With that being said if it breaks don't fix it. Furthermore because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded Here within these lines is where I believe The Duty Framework is in effect. Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Is or has been very instrumental in keeping certain aspects of this tradition alive (which is ironic). Of all the parts of the tradition to hold on to, considering that more has been done away with than has been in the past, why would the most tragic portion of it be kept? That era has come to an end. Also Mr. Graves and Mr. Summers made up the slips of paper and put them in the box This is staged to me, and also leads me to

believe that unless you're on the good side of these gentlemen you run the risk of being next in line literally. No matter where the box was hidden, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves had already inserted the paper slips in and knew what was on them. So placing them in any of the other locations didn't really mean much. Even reading further along in the story it says that another ritual had been allowed to lapse. If so much of what was installed during the initiation of this tradition has been done away with. Again why continue?

Tessie Hutchinson, I believe was targeted, because she was preselected, she was late, and she might have reminded Mr. Summers of his own wife, so much that he vowed by no means could there be two women of the alike in the village. Speaking of which, with the exception of the one comment the narrator mentioned about her being scold Mrs. Summers is spoken of no more throughout the story. What made her exempt? She wasn't even named amongst those that were in assembled for the lottery, which certainly speaks volumes. For instance, maybe her demeanor as described by the narrator wasn't as bad as the villagers claimed it to be. Perhaps that was her way of saying that she didn't agree with, nor did she want to partake in this tradition because of the gruesome outcome that it would result in. While her private pleas with her husband to bring this ritual to an end as other surrounding towns were also beginning to do went unanswered. She expressed her disapproval by not showing up. Not to mention the fact that she and Mr. Summers had no children somewhere in her heart, maybe she wasn't willing to bring children into this village, never knowing if or when they would be chosen in the lottery.

Mr. Summers points out that Mrs. Hutchinson was late and that he thought they would have to begin without her. The narrator also indicated that Mr. Summers did so cheerfully. An eyebrow raiser to say the least, also seen as an indicator that Tessie was the chosen one for what was soon to come. Tessie explained that she had forgotten the date, and was caught in the house doing the dishes. Somehow within her I believe she knew that on that day hers would be the chosen ticket that year. As the lottery was declared open by Mr. Summers, families nervously yet anxiously awaited their turn for their last name to be called up to choose their ticket. Apparently male chauvinism was prevalent in that day. Where the Husband and rightfully so were the heads of the household and the wives were there to provide the only services they felt suited for women in that day and time. When the men of the family were not present, the next male in the line that was of age was to choose the ticket for the family. The wives weren't even considered capable of plucking a ticket, unless they insisted on being allowed to choose. Old Man Warner who was the oldest man in the village somehow managed to be spared for 77 years in the lottery. He was under the impression that this ritual was a means to a plentiful harvest for the upcoming year and that this lottery was the only way for this to happen. When a few of those that were gathered began to talk of other towns either doing away with or considering doing away with the lottery. Old Man Warner thought it was crazy. He began calling them pack of young fools comparing what he thought would be the alternative meal of chickweeds and acorns (which happens to have more health benefits than corn) making it clear that he would much rather continue with this unethical act on the basis of tradition. A tradition that

benefited No One. While I believe that the town members would have readily given up this lottery it seemed that no one was willing to stand up to Mr. Warner and debate his lone voice which was set on continuing this annual ceremony.

The families were called one by one until the Hutchinson's name was finally called. Tessie argues that Bill wasn't given enough time to pick his slip and that it was unfair. Her argument shows that she wasn't ready face the rapidly approaching destiny, knowing that at every lottery there will be a human sacrifice. I found this story to be highly immoral. The act itself is brutal, and in this case life and death are but a lottery ticket away. On another note it's one thing for Adults to partake this ceremonial act, but when you involve children that brings on a whole different meaning. For instance and someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles. How horrifying for this young child, and his siblings. Especially when it's their own mother they are helping to stone to death. How damaging this must be for the children's psyche. Not only have they taken part in killing their parent, but the reality of never seeing them again, if they are even old enough to grasp that whole concept is still there. Also for the spouse to have to stone their significant other, and the emotional despair of going from a family to single parenthood and the permanent absence of a spouse in this case , or whichever family member that may be chosen in the next go round. In essence I compare this situation to those that may suffer from mental disorders not from birth, but more so from tragedies that may have happened in their life that have gone unnoticed or undiscovered until that person goes off the deep end, because they held on to and internalized this

negative experience(s). Never sharing it with anyone or receiving counseling. The switch turns on and then you have these random killings, hostage situations, senseless murders and other violent acts. Once more investigating has been done, you come to find that this child/ person was responsible for taking part in killing their own mom, dad, or siblings and not by choice for the sake of a ritual and they were never able to forgive themselves or replay it in their minds. As a result, a person's life no longer holds the value that it would have otherwise had they never been included in situation like this.