

Analysis of the film we need to talk about kevin

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“ We Need to Talk About Kevin” is a movie adaptation of Lionel Shriver’s novel with the same title. The story revolves around a family of four, but the main focus is on the relationship between the mother (Eva, played by Tilda Swinton) and the son (Kevin, played by Rock River, Jasper Newell and Ezra Miller).

The movie goes back and forth in time to show different points in Eva’s life. The use of flashbacks and the clever combination of the ‘ past’ and ‘ present’ scenes illustrates the contrast of what her life was like with her family and without, certain details in both let us know what Eva was thinking and feeling. There is a great significance to details in this film. For example the use of the colour red, this could represent fear, blood and the tense relationships Eva had not only with Kevin but also Franklin, her husband. At the beginning of the movie we see people in a pool of red, this makes us think of violence, a massacre, but really it’s just a tomato festival filmed from a distance. This scene seems strange and out of place, but it sets a certain mood and is also a way of introducing Eva’s occupation.

Eva is a well-paid travel guide author, she is absolutely in love with her job and gets to travel around the world. Her husband and her are passionately in love with one another, however Franklin prefers her at home. Franklin wants a child and after some time, once Eva is pregnant it is quite clear that she isn’t thrilled about this, however details such as little ballerinas running around suggest she wishes for a girl.

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She eventually gives birth to Kevin, and we can tell from the very beginning that something isn't right when he cries all the time except when he's with his father Franklin. The movie lets us follow through the growing up of Kevin, the way he manipulates with his family and uses genius and cruel ways to get what he wants. As a baby he clearly prefers Franklin, but he's always working while Eva stays at home with Kevin. This makes Eva exhausted and it doesn't get much better with time. As a toddler, Kevin continues to be disobedient.

He doesn't communicate with Eva or respond to any of her actions, so she takes him to the doctor thinking he has autism. The doctor confirms that there isn't anything wrong with him medically, which seems to break Eva's heart as this means that to Kevin there is something wrong with her. She admits she was much happier before, but she never gives up on Kevin. She possibly sees Kevin as a challenge that she can later add to her accomplishments or maybe she realizes it's her duty to always be there for him, no matter what.

Kevin is a very troubled and difficult character, from an early age he seems to do everything he can to make Eva miserable and he takes pleasure from this. He starts playing violent videogames and as a teenager he collects computer viruses. He continues to use nappies until about the age of 6 and once Eva gives birth to her second child Celia, the first thing Kevin does is splash some water in her eyes. However, there are some scenes which let us know that despite Kevin's 'cool' act he is interested in his mum, that instead of his usual 'whatever' to everything, he does have preferences, and that he isn't emotionless and behind the 'mask' he could be a normal boy. Kevin has

a way of making sure everyone does what he wants. He blackmails Eva, pretends to be a sweet little boy in front of Franklin and uses the fact that Celia adores him to order her around and express his violent ways on her, knowing she'll never betray him. Kevin seems to live only for his mother, he doesn't really care about Franklin and Celia, they're just his tools, the end of the movie proves this point.

The peak of the story, as well as the borderline between 'past' and 'present' is a massacre carried out by Kevin, where he kills a number of people. He plans this for some time and commits the crime just before his 16th birthday. This is his grand finale of making Eva's life a living hell, knowing that this time it's permanent. He is very successful in doing this as not only does the whole town now hate her but she hates herself too, blaming herself for what Kevin's done. She punishes herself with a boring new job, tiny house and thememories. After the massacre she pays visits to Kevin in the juvenile prison, he continues to annoy her at every chance he gets until a few days before his 18th birthday (also the 2 year anniversary of the massacre) he finally seems to have realized that this wasn't just a joke.

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The end of the movie is open to interpretation. To me it shows Eva ready to move on with life and accept her son the way he is. I don't think she forgave him or ever will, but she possibly realized that having him as a reminder of everything is punishment enough and there is no reason not to continue living.

I liked the movie, I thought the acting was incredible and the choice of actors, especially for Kevin was great too, he looked like the same person throughout all the stages of his life. I think the viewers have a lot to think about as the story unfolds, I like that there was no definite answer to anything, just like in everyday life, we have to try and understand things ourselves.