

The last night analysis

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The Last Night At the beginning of the passage it is instantaneously established that the circumstances in which the two brothers, Andre and Jacob, are currently residing in are appalling. These would be the same conditions that most of the Jewish people would have been residing in prior to being taken to concentration camps. We are aware that the conditions are poor as Faulks tells us that ' Andre was lying on the floor' which implies that he has nowhere else to sleep, it also shows how exhausted he must have been as young boys would not normally be resting.

We are also informed at the start of the passage that the boys are French-Jewish, by their names. As Andre lies on the floor a Jewish orderly comes round with postcards on which the deportees can write their final message. This shows us that a percentage of the Jewish people were collaborating with the Nazis, although the Jewish orderly would have been lower than the Germans they still had a sense of responsibility. This could have looked like a betrayal from the view of the rest of the Jewish people.

Furthermore, even though the Jewish orderly has joined forces with the Nazis he is still sneaking postcards for the Jewish people to write their final messages on. This portrays a sense of loyalty from the Jewish orderly. Here Faulks calls the Jewish people ' deportees' which reminds us, after a pleasant picture of the Jewish orderly's loyalty, that they are being deported by force. Following on from this we are told that they are to write their final messages on the postcards which again enables us to reminisce on the circumstances. Faulks does this by using the word ' final'.

This emphasises that this potentially could be the last thing that the Jewish people ever write which truly illustrates to us the reality of the situation. The

' final message' could also allude to Hitler's final solution which would portray how the Jewish people were regarded and consequently the terrifying experience that they had to go through. However, the Jewish orderly does not take the postcards to send but instructs the Jewish people to ' throw them from the train as camp orders forbade access to the post'. This not only shows us the collaboration from the Jewish orderly, as he would not help them any further.

The Jewish people were told to throw their postcards from the train, this implies that they would throw the postcards from the train with the hope that a French person would find it and send it on. This reminds us that, although the French person may have sent the postcard on, there was still a great amount more of French people in France at that time rather than Germans. This shows us that the French people have subconsciously, or some consciously, collaborated with the Germans. Faulks then uses the same technique that he used earlier in the passage by creating a pleasant image for the reader followed by a glimpse of reality.

He does this here by constructing a pleasing image of the Jewish people's final messages being found and sent on to then remind the reader that they are in fact on their way to a death camp. As the Jewish people write their final messages we are informed that there are two or three pencils being passed around, pencils that had survived the barracks search. Yet again this gives us an idea about the type of environment that the brothers are in as Parisian buses can hold around four hundred people yet there are only two to three pencils.

The fact that they are not even allowed to have pencils portrays how the Jewish people were treated. During this Faulks includes that the Jewish people had been through the barracks search which once more reminds us of their inevitable futures. How the Jewish people react while writing their postcards are really conveys their experience as ' some wrote with sobbing passion, some with punctilious care'. The reader is immediately drawn to this as Faulks has used plosives within the sentence.

This phrase shows us how people react differently in situations that they cannot control: one phrase is emotional and effective, the other clipped and precise. Furthermore they would have believed that this letter is how they would have been remembered and as we are later told they viewed that their safety almost depended on their letter. In addition the people writing with ' punctilious care' could refer to the novel for the reason that as Faulks writes he does so vigilantly because he has not experienced what he is writing about, therefore he needs to choose his language carefully, given the subject is a serious matter.

A woman comes round giving sandwiches and water to the children. We are told that the children ' clustered' around the pail of water as they passed sardine cans from one to another. I think that you feel as though the woman is a caring person who would have made the children feel as comfortable as possible throughout; this conveys a pleasant image to the reader. Faulks uses the word pail instead of bucket which could allude to the loss of colour and furthermore loss of hope of the Jewish people. The children ' clustered' round the pail of water, while using sardine cans to drink from, once again presenting us with how the Jewish people were treated by the Germans. The

sardine cans are passed from one to another which gives us the sense that they are suffering together and how the worst side of humanity can often bring out the best side of humanity. While the younger children are drinking the water an older boy embraced the woman 'in his gratitude' which shows us that he is so grateful that he feels as if physical contact was needed to get across his appreciation, which is very rare for a teenage boy.

This shows us how this experience would have had a vast effect on peoples' behaviour. Once again Faulks uses the same technique to remind the reader of reality, by leading on from the older boy showing his appreciation to telling us that the bucket was soon empty. The author now uses the word bucket instead of pail which could refer to the idea of a bucket list and the realisation that only a small percentage of the Jewish people would have made it out of the death camps alive. The phrase 'the bucket was soon empty' also seems to carry a resonance beyond its basic meaning.

After the woman left we are told that the brothers fall asleep with 'only the small hours of the night to go through'. This refers to how slowly the hours go when you are attempting to sleep; their lack of sleep also portrays the worry of the Jewish people. Faulks tells us that Andre was sleeping on the straw, 'the soft bloom of his cheek laid, uncaring, in the dung.' The fact that Andre was sleeping in dung and on straw implies that the Jewish people were treated like animals as Faulks makes the comparison.

Furthermore Faulks grants us with a pleasant image of the 'soft bloom' of Andre's cheek which gives us a pleasing illustration within the unpleasant illustration of the dung in which Andre is lying. Additionally Andre's limbs are intertwined with Jacob's which also presents us with a pleasing image. These

believeshow us that there is some hope, in terms of human contact, within a horrible circumstance. As the children slept, ' the adults in the room sat slumped against the walls, wakeful and talking in lowered voices. Faulks describes how the adults sat as being ' slumped against the walls', I feel that this gives a sense ofdepressionand also resignation which portrays the atmosphere within the room. The adults are talking with ' lowered voices' which demonstrates their thoughtfulness towards the children who have managed to sleep, the fact that the children are able to sleep reminds us of their innocence and therefore the terrible circumstances that only a small percentage of the children will become adults. Such thoughts are inevitable, given the date of the novel (1999); Faulks only need to hint at such things.

As the morning arrives water is passed around for anyone who is thirsty. We are told that anyone who did drink drank in ' silence' which I believe gives us a sense of the unknown as everyone is waiting and pondering as to what will happen next. As they drank there was ' the noise of an engine - a familiar sound to many of them, the homely thudding of a Parisian bus. ' Most of the Jewish people in the room would have taken these buses in their day to day lives, to go to the shops or to go to school; this shows us how something so familiar to them can change so rapidly to become something so unfamiliar.

It is a ' homely thudding' they hear which is extremely ironic that they are being transported to be killed using Parisian buses; it once again gives us a sense of the collaboration between the French and the Germans. Before the Jewish people progress onto the buses there is a register taken. As the registration took place ' five white-and-green municipal buses' sat in the corner of the yard, ' trembling'. The white-and-green municipal buses are not

just normal French buses but the buses of the capital, you almost get the sense that the buses trembled as they were afraid of where they were going.

The trembling could also represent the fear of the Jewish people. The word 'municipal' almost implies the buses are part of the collaboration in what was known as Vichy France. As a policeman called out names in alphabetical order the 'commandant of the camp' sat at a long table, not only does this again show us the collaboration between the French and Germans as it is a French 'gendarme' calling out the names but it also gives us an idea of what the Germans were like.

It is almost as if because the Germans are calling their names in alphabetical order it makes the situation more respectable. It is bizarre how the Germans made mass murder organised. As the registrations takes place Andre's name is called and he moves towards the bus with Jacob, this shows us the bond between the brothers and their instinct to stick together as Jacob's name was not called. When Andre's name is called it almost tells us that it was his destiny to be there, as if the register was a register of death that he could not have escaped from.

While the brothers walked towards the bus we are told a woman was wailing from the other side of the courtyard and 'from windows open on the dawn, a shower of food was thrown towards them.' Firstly Faulks portrays the awful side to human nature as it is ironic that it is now dawn which should mark a new day and new hope yet the Jewish people remain hopeless however Faulks then shows us the best side of human nature as a woman throws her own food to put the children's needs before her own.

As the woman calls the brothers name it shows us the loss of their identity as they would have no longer been called by their names but by numbers. Briefly after this Andre looked up and by ' chance' he saw a woman staring at a child, at first he believed that the woman was staring at the child with hatred however he soon realised she was attempting to fix a picture of the child so that she may have remembered forever.

This shows us that, as Andre saw it by chance, there was luck within the awful circumstances however it also shows us how dreadful the circumstances were as a woman knows she would never see the child again and was trying to fix an image so that she could remember ' forever'. As Andre ' mounted the bus' we are told that ' he held on hard' to Jacob, I believe that it is ironic that the Jewish people were mounting the bus which is a positive motion, yet they were being transported to their deaths.

Furthermore Faulks uses alliteration as ' he held on hard', this phrase underlines the desperation of the brothers as you get the sense that they believe if they hold on tightly to one another it will protect them. Some children could not manage to get onto the buses as they were too small which highlights how young some of the Jewish people were and once again reminds us of the harsh reality that only a small percentage of these children would have become adults.

Andre's bus was momentarily delayed as a baby of a few months was being lifted into the back of the bus, this once again shows us how awful the situation was as the baby was so young yet the Germans would have not hesitated to kill it. The baby's wooden crib was hung over the passenger rail; this is contradictory as the Jewish people are no longer passengers but <https://assignbuster.com/the-last-night-analysis-analytical-essay-samples/>

prisoners. As the bus leaves the headlights lit up a ' cafe opposite before the driver turned the wheel and headed for the station. ' This shows us that all of this was done before the day began which shows us once again how organised the Germans were.

Furthermore the headlights lit up a cafe which again shows great irony as cafes are a symbol of Paris, the city of love and hope, yet the Jewish people are hopeless. The driver turning the wheel could allude to the wheel of fortune as the wheel is headed for the cafe, an image of hope and joy, yet is turned the other way which will eventually lead to their deaths. I think that this passage was edited well, for the anthology, so that it leaves people wondering what happens next and also ends on the contradicting images of the Parisian cafe and the final destination.