

Analysis paper on cathedral by raymond carver

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



The Role of Setting in the Short Story Cathedral Cathedral is an intriguing piece that describes the impact a blind man imparts on the narrator. The experience takes place in the home of the narrator when the blind man visits. Robert, the blind man is a close friend to the narrator's wife. The narrator unwillingly allows the visit due to his fears of interacting with the blind. Robert arrives in good time for dinner and, a few drinks and this gives the two men an opportunity to bond.

The narrator builds up the story in the living room of his house. The setting creates a favorable atmosphere for the two men to interact and get to know each other. As the host, the narrator has to contribute in the conversation to keep the guest comfortable. Despite his fears and prejudices, he takes the obligations of a hospitable host. It is in this setting, mood, and atmosphere that the narrator experiences change. The setting allows events to run from dining together to sharing of drinks. Throughout these events, the narrator observes the blind man with keen interest trying to understand his world. At the beginning of the story, the narrator doubts the close relationship between his wife and the blind man. His insecurities and closed-mindedness limit his happiness in marriage. As they share a meal in the dining room, the narrator realizes that despite his lack of vision, Robert can comfortably observe the dining etiquette. The narrator's view towards the blind changes, as the plot of the story unfolds in his house.

After dinner, a few drinks and cigarettes, the narrator's wife falls asleep in the living room, leaving the two men to talk. The narrator intends to use the television as an escape from engaging in a conversation with Robert. Robert lacks vision and this creates a barrier between the two men. The open-

mindful blind man is not willing to go to bed but prefers to get to know his host better. Despite his attitude towards Robert, the narrator gives in to the guest's request and the two indulge in a conversation on cathedrals. This conversation crops up because of a channel on the television that seeks to expose the viewer to cathedrals from different cultures. The setting poses a challenge to the narrator to take the initiative of enlightening Robert on the appearance of cathedrals. Due to lack of vision, Robert cannot imagine the appearance of a cathedral. The situation at hand forces the narrator to try to paint a picture of a cathedral using words but fails. This is the point at which the two men realize the need of a better connection.

The two belong to different worlds and require a more efficient form of communication. The setting effectively exposes the introverted world of the narrator. This negatively affects his well-being as a social being. The narrator has over time build a wall around himself. Preformed prejudices and judgments drive his actions. He has much insecurity in his relationship with his wife. On the contrary, the blind man opens himself to the world. Despite his lack of sight, he leads a normal life and associates with people from all lifestyles.

In the events that follow in the living room, the narrator and Robert indulge in a life changing experience. Together, they draw a cathedral on paper. This is a unifying event and the two men bond in a memorable way as the narrator describes. On closing his eyes, the experience carries away the narrator to another world. He leaves the world of ignorance, insecurity and prejudice and experiences a new feeling. The feeling is immense and even though he is home, he felt like he was inside nothing. This explains the open

mindset he experienced. He gets to see through the eyes of the blind man and he admits that the experience means a lot to him.

It is evident that the setting chosen by the narrator allows the story to unfold and creates an atmosphere that greatly promotes the theme of the story. In addition, the setting gives the characters an opportunity to expose their worlds and prompts them to overcome the barriers and boundaries that separate them. The narrator appropriately chooses a setting that clearly brings out the theme of the story. The time and place he chooses allow the plot to unfold effectively.

Work Cited

Kennedy, X. and Gioia, Dana. Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing, Interactive Edition [With Access Code]. New York: Longman Publishing Group, 2009. Print.

Parenthetical citations needed for paragraph two, three, and five.