

This is what it means to say phoenix, arizona

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Amanda Sehdev 03/19/2013 Setting Essay In Sherman Alexie's " This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona", a young man named Victor finds out that his father has passed, but can't afford to travel from Spokane to Phoenix, especially after the fact that he had just lost his job at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The first setting in Spokane describes what Victor and other Indians go through on the reserve, this cultural aspect is actually interesting because nobody knows what others go through and how tough their lives may actually be.

Victor asks the tribal council if he can borrow money from the tribal council until he gets the assets that his father left for him. All they can offer him is \$100, which he agrees to take. Victor's mother barely has enough money to help him out and his family doesn't really keep in touch with him. Victor's old childhood friend Thomas Builds-The-Fire hears about his issue and offers to help only under the condition that he can tag along. Thomas is a storyteller on the reserve, who everyone thinks is weird and nobody wants to listen to because he tells the same story over and over again.

Victor agreed to let Thomas help him and let him ride along. On the flight to Phoenix, Thomas and Victor were sitting next to a woman, who was flexing her body in all sorts of directions. Thomas embarrasses Victor by asking her questions and talking during the whole flight, even though she did turn out to be a nice woman. Once they landed, they got a taxi to the trailer where Victor's dad lived. Walking into the trailer was a little hard for the two of them because Victor's dad had passed away in the trailer and was not found for over a week.

They describe that Arizona is over one-hundred degrees during the summer, so I can only imagine the stench that came out of the trailer. Victor told Thomas that he didn't have to help but he still insisted. After they had retrieved all the belongings that Victor felt was worth keeping, they put their stuff in the pickup truck that his dad left behind and headed home. They traveled through Nevada describing how they didn't see any wildlife and lack of water. It just so happened that when Victor asked Thomas to drive, he ends up running over the first animal that they see in Nevada. After that, Thomas decided that he should drive again.

When they get home, Victor thanks Thomas for his help and gives him half of his dad's ashes because they were all like family. Thomas tells Victor that he is going to take the ashes to Spokane Falls, where Thomas's father had found Thomas and brought him back to the reserve. After they got back and said their good-byes, they both knew things would end up going back to the way they were before. Victor found himself wondering where all the ties of the community went and the sense of the community. The setting in this story is just background, I don't think that there was much described about where they were or what the surroundings were.