

"the pearl" john steinbeck essay sample



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Summary: In *The Pearl*, Steinbeck tries to say that human nature tendency toward greed, deception and evil, which can cause something good and beautiful to become something bad and evil in both physical and mental ways.

In *The Pearl*, the author, John Steinbeck, uses the pearl to express what human nature is. At the beginning of the novel, the pearl that Kino finds is described as large as being incandescent and as "perfect as the moon"; by the end of the novel, Kino looks at the pearl it is "ugly, gray, like a malignant growth." In general, mankind is greedy, deceptive and evil. In the novel, Steinbeck tries to say that human nature tendency toward greed, deception and evil, which can cause something good and beautiful to become something bad and evil in both physical and mental ways. First of all, Steinbeck shows human beings are instinctively greedy. Steinbeck uses the scene to show humans are gluttonous is where the doctor comes to Kino's house and heals Coyotito after Kino has found a pearl. When Coyotito is bitten by the scorpion, Kino takes him to the doctor to get treatment. But the doctor refuses to heal Coyotito because Kino is indigent. Later On, after Kino owns the pearl, the doctor automatically comes to Kino's house and offers a "treatment" for Coyotito.

After he "treats" Coyotito, he pretends that he does not know Kino has a pearl and asks Kino about the medical expenses. "You have a pearl? A good pearl? The doctor [asks] with interest" (35). The reality is that he wants Kino's pearl more than giving people treatments. Although the doctor has a lot of money and his life is very plentiful, he still wants more and is discontented. Obviously, the greed had already controlled the doctor's mind

and the way he acts. Another example that humans are greedy is the scene where Kino does not want to give up the pearl and keeps all his dreams also demonstrates people's avarice. Juana, who is smart enough to figure out the reality of the pearl trouble, advises Kino to throw the pearl away. Juana says, " This pearl is evil. This pearl is like a sin. It will destroy us all!"(38). Even though Juana warns Kino that the pearl will bring misfortunes to the family and advises him to throw the pearl away, Kino neither takes the advice nor listens to what his wife says because Kino's mind is already overtaken by his dreams.

He is only thinking of being " Juana and Coyotito and himself standing and kneeling at the high altar" (24), "[dress] in the new white clothes" (24), " holding a Winchester carbine" (25), and " Coyotito sitting at a little desk in a school" (25). Clearly, the greed is surpassed his mind and controls his actions and what he says. After Kino has found of " the pearl of the world", everyone is willing to own it and they begin to start think of their own dreams, " Every men suddenly [becomes] related to Kino, and Kino's pearl [goes] into the dreams, the schemes...man's enemy" (23). And so, the narrator says, " For it is said humans are never satisfied, that you give them one thing and they want something more" (25). In the scene where people try to steal Kino's pearl after the pearl is found (37-38), they do whatever that is possible in order to steal the pearl. Jealousy has grown in the heart of these people and jealousy has turned into greed.