

Crossing: fiction and son



“ Crossing” is a short story, which indicates a brief work of literature. The narrator is Mark Slouka, who published the short story in 2009. The short story is about a man, who takes his son to deserted place, where he remembers having had good experiences with his own father. The man in the story is divorced from the mother of his child, but he wishes to still remain a good relationship with him who?. He carries his son over the river in the deserted place, but on their way home, the current is very strong, and it becomes a challenge for him to stay on his own feet.

“ Crossing” deals with the son and father relationship, while bringing up the theme manhood. . I will in this essay make an analysis, in which I analyze the narrator, the narrative or technique, the relationship between father and son, while analyzing the setting and afterwards look into the themes. At last I will interpret the text. The story has a third person narrator, who through out the story appears limited.

The narrator is not omniscient, but he knows a little bit about the main characters feelings: “ When they came out of the trees and onto the stony beach he felt a small shock, as if he was looking at a house he’d grown up in but now barely recognized”, (p. 2, l. 33-34). If the narrator wasn’t omniscient, he would not know what the shock reminded the man off. Mark Slouka uses many narrator techniques. In the beginning he uses imagery and animation to give the reader at greater picture of the surroundings: “ When the first car appeared he could see it from a long way off, dragging a cloud of mist like a parachute [...]”, (p. 2, l. 1-2).

A car can't drag a cloud of a mist, and therefore are a thing, in this case, given a human characteristic. In the last part of the sentence Slouka uses imagery, when he compares a cloud of mist with a parachute. Another example of imagery is then Slouka tries to define the way his body feels: " A muscle in in his shoulder was jerking like a poisoned animal", (p. 5, l. 146-147). Another fantastic imagery that Slouka uses is: " The river. It wanted to be whole, unbroken. It wanted him gone. He could see it, forming and re-forming, thick-walled jade, smoothing out its sides with its thumbs like a hypnotized potter", (p. 5, l. 143-145).

His imagery gives the reader a picture of how his muscle may feel. Another narrator technique, which Slouka appears to use, is the use of dynamic verbs. A dynamic verb expresses an action or change and may occur in extended time. " He breathed, feeling his heart thrashing in his ribs", (p. 4, l. 117). Another example is: " he remembered the two of them working together, quietly, easily, then his father crawling into the tent to lay out the sleeping bag", (p. 3-4, l. 76-77). By using these dynamic verbs, the story will linguistically become much more vibrant to the reader, as if the story happened just at this moment.

Spoken language is likewise a part of Slouka's narrator technique: " One stupid fucking move, and your son on your back? ", (p. 5, l. 138). Another example of spoken language is: " My God, all his other fuckups were just preparations for this", (p. 5, l. 135-136). These words are all used in a situation in which the main character appears frustrated. The reader will because of these words feel his frustration, namely because he does not use

such words in ordinary situations. The short story takes residence pudsigtd ordvalg in the nature, near a river.

It's a vehement river, which causes the main character many problems while crossing it the last time. The nature is clearly a symbol of a typical father and son thing. The main character wants to keep in contact with his son, after splitting up with the mother. So he takes the son on a trip to the nature, which for a long time always has been a man thing. You see it in movies, where fathers bring their child out for fishing, so they have some father and son alone time. It's a man thing to do, while girls shop, men go to the nature the wild and travels back in time to regain their manhood by doing what their ancestors did.

No fancy technology is aloud, only man vs. nature. The setting of this story does have play an important role. It's a clear example of a father trying to make a bond with his son by doing it the best way he knows and how he was taught, namely by challenging nature. The themes in this short story are man vs. nature, bonding, one shot and love. Man vs. nature is definitely one of the main themes, because the story takes place in the nature, on a trip where a father and a son are supposed to challenge nature, which will result in the to of them getting a closer bond to each other.

Another main theme is bonding. The whole idea behind the two them going to that river, is for them to make a new and stronger bond, now that the family is tripping? apart. The third theme is one shot. By this I mean that the father thinks that he has only got one shot to connect with his son. When he was about to fall, while crossing the river he said: " My God, all his other

fuckups were just preparations for this”. The father appears to have committed many fuckups in the past, and therefore he thought that this would be his last chance for getting it right with his son.

And the last theme in this short story is love, because all this trouble the main character puts him self through, is all out of love to his son and their future together. The way I interpret the story is that it shows the consequences of a divorce. The damage it can do to a family and how parents separately need to maintain a good relationship to their child. And the nature is a certain? symbol of that known phenomenon, where fathers and sons take a trip to the nature with the purpose to bond in a male environment.