

Analysis of "tell the women we're going" essay



Analysis of " Tell the women we're going" The short story " Tell the women we're going" by Raymond Carver is a minimalist yet detailed story about two young men who have been best friends since forever. They both live a " normal", good and middle class life in a suburb with wife, kids and car. Apparently the suburbia and the missing youth went to their heads, which in the end leads to a catastrophic action. The story takes place in the southern states of America, in a suburb. In the introduction, everything is idyllic and there is a perfect atmosphere.

You can feel the true suburbia bliss, and the entire introduction is like a colored scarab. In the introduction we meet Bill and Jerry. We get a lot of details about the characters, but nothing about personal thoughts and feelings. Bill and Jerry did everything together until Jerry got married. They were like the exact same person. They even dated the same girls - " wore each other's shirts and sweaters and pegged pants, and dated and banged the same girls - whichever came up as a matter of course. " (page 1, line 5) Even though Bill and Jerry are best friends, their allegiances is very uneven, because Bill looks up to Jerry.

Jerry is the first one to get married, get a job and have kids. Suddenly Bill seems to be the 3rd wheel, in a strange way - " Or sometimes Jerry and Carol would head off to the bathroom, and Bill would have to move to the kitchen and pretend to be interested in the cupboards and the refrigerator and not trying to listen. " (page 2, line 2) In this situation Bill seems to be embarrassed, jealous and also impressed with Jerry. Jerry doesn't consider the presence of Bill, because he doesn't see Bill as a " regular guest". The

allegations between Jerry and Bill is going through some changes throughout the story.

At first, the boys are equal; they study together, share a car, and take the same jobs. When Jerry dropped out of school to get married and find a job, he suddenly turns in to " a grownup", while Bill still continues to be a teenager. Bill seems to be jealous with Jerry life, and feels separated from Jerry - "... Bill went over to Jerry and Carol every chance he got. It made him feel older, having married friends. " (page 1, line 19) Their relationship is a social game of pretend to be a happy family man, and to be best friends. Bill wants to follow through in the game, so he gets married.

We don't know if it is because of love, or if it is because he wants to get things with Jerry back to the way they were. When Bill gets married and finds a job, everything turns back to normal and the harmony is back again. Both families seem to be doing quite well, like any other suburb family, but when the families got together, it was always at Jerry place, because he had the barbecue and all the kids. Bill starts to realize that Jerry isn't feeling as fine as he thought - " He said, " anything wrong, man? I mean, you know. " Jerry finished his beer and then mashed the can. He shrugged. IOW know," he said. Bill nodded. " (page 3, line 18) Bill senses a change in Jerry, but he doesn't know what it is. The fact is that Jerry is bored to death by the American dream, which turns out to be a monotonous and meaningless ideal. He has managed to accomplish several goals, which normally is won by a 40 year old man. To make up for the missing youth, Bill and Jerry go to a bar to play billiard and drink some beers with their friend Riley. Riley asks how Bill and Jerry are doing, and says: " So how you boys ongoing? Where

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you been keeping yourselves? You boys getting any on the side? (page 4, line 19) Here, Riley wakes up the inner frustration primarily in Jerry. Jerry realizes what is missing in his life, what he never has had time to do. He finds a desire in himself that he wants to be fulfilled. When they are back on the road again, Jerry spots two girls and says: " I could use some of that. " (page 5, line 8) He is not only playing with the idea about cheating on his wife, but he is also disrespectful towards women. He refers to women as " cents" and " dissociates". The title " Tell the women we're going" is also disrespectful towards women, because it is demanding and dominating.

The quote: Mimi look tired. Too much exercise isn't good for a person. Especially for girls" (page 6, line 22) also underlines the suppression of women, because Jerry only sees the girls as little pretty things that are meant to be " bucked", and therefore too weak to handle a bicycle ride. When they first met the girls, it started out being flirting, but relatively innocent, but later on when they followed them up to the Picture Rock, his behavior starts to be a little suspicious. When Jerry follows the girls up the mountain, you sense that his intentions aren't good.

You wouldn't imagine that this sexual hunt would turn out to be two killed and raped innocence girls. This sudden and open ending, is a typical minimalist Carver-feature. There is an omniscient camera eye narrator with an inner view on Bill. In the end, Bill smokes a cigarette and turns to look for the car, which represents the key to the life back home. Suddenly he couldn't see the car, which means that there is no turning back - " He couldn't see the car now' (page 8, line 24) The short story is centered, among others, on sex roles and relationships.

The frustration about their dictated suburbia life is heading towards the women. Bill is following through in the game, without wanting to. His whole life he has been used to follow Jerry like a dog, and do the same things as he does. Jerry objectifies women, and at some level, he has never really loved his wife. He connects the missing youth and freedom with his wife. He has never really experienced real love, and that is why he mentally and physically managed to kill the two girls.