

Writing short stories by ailsa cox

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The story implements a structure designed to at first draw the reader into the narrative. At the beginning of the story, a detailed explanation of the narrator's life in France is given. This functions to establish his situation in direct opposition to that of his friend Preston. While Preston leads a lavish lifestyle the narrator's existence is significantly modest, leading him to state, " as I sip my sour drink a tremendous sour sense of the world's huge unfairness crowds ruthlessly in" (Boyd, pg. 83). In addition to establishing the fundamental opposition between the two characters, these early descriptions introduce a sense of mystery – why is Preston in France – that functions to create a sense of suspense that draws the reading into the narrative.

The pace of the story is regulated through a series of impressionistic breaks that designate a change in time. The breaks function to structure the story as journal Esque, adding a stylistic dimension that makes it less a barebones narrative, and opening the text to the reader's imagination. In this regards it's worth quoting Kristeva (1983, pg. 199) as her formulation of this phenomenon is apt and relevant in characterizing the structural and pacing aspects of the short story:

Next to complete clauses that are nonetheless concatenated by the three dots, one notes two kinds of ellipses. On the one hand, the points of suspension cut off a constituent from the main clause or from the predicate; thus isolated, the constituent loses its identity as object phrase, for instance, and while it does not gain a truly autonomous value.