

Short stories and poems



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Dulce Et Decorum Est- Wilfred Owen- Title from Latin statement Dulce et decorum est pro patria moria: how sweet it is to die for one's country- Summary: gas bomb goes off and speaker fumbles in frenzy to get mask on, sees another man unable to breathe "drowning" → normal people do not understand pain of war, would not preach to children that going to war is honorable- Theme: not honorable to die for one's country, don't believe lie

The Rear Guard- Siegfried Sassoon- Summary: comes down in trench, ask man how to get to headquarters but finds that the man is dead, not sleeping- Theme: Fine line between living and dying

The Hollow Man- T. S. Eliot- Summary: hollow men have done nothing with their lives; nothing good, never make statement- Nursery rhyme = contradiction, joyful but serious topic; unable to complete prayer showing that they are seen as unholy to God- Allusion to Guy Fawkes and Gunpowder Plot: Fawkes never lit fuse supposed to kill King James I (ANTI-HERO)- Man of conviction - something you believe in but not religious (HERO)- Hollow = dead inside, no faith/conviction, no impact- Allusions to Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad, Dante's Inferno

On the Bottom- Primo Levi, from Survival in Auschwitz- Memoir- All men are thirsty → tap but sign that said the water is forbidden to drink- Ordered to watch shoes so no one would steal it → guards take them anyway- "Not dare to lift their eyes" - did not want to see their phantom selves; no will to live- Guards did everything to make them feel ashamed- Only able to survive by hanging on to religion/hope- Psychological torture worse than physical torture

The War- Marguerite Duras- Found husband in Dachau - Robert L- Not expected to make it → snuck him out; couldn't recognize Robert L- Robert L not allowed to eat even though lots of food

Never Shall I Forget- Elie Wiesel: bring awareness of Holocaust to world,

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Nobel Peace Prize in 1986- started from prose in Night- Remember - beginning of horrific experience, lost his faith, cost to humanity- Those who forget destined to repeat it Blood, Sweat, and Tears- Winston Churchill- Churchill wants Parliament to approve appointments of ministers in his cabinet- Title indicates Churchill willing to give all of his hard work, dedication towards British victory- Parallel sentence structure to state his goals- Tone is admiration; not light-hearted- Types of appeal/rhetorical devices: logos (logic), pathos (emotion) The Silver Fifty-Sen Pieces- Yasunari Kawabata- Yoshiko spends allowance on crystal paperweight with dog engraved in it → happy that mother and sister approve of her purchase because took long time to think of purchasing it- Mother wants to buy umbrella because of sale so rash decision, Yoshiko hinted not to buy it- Conservative vs. impulsive- End of story everything is destroyed by war, remembering her mother- Theme: smallest things trigger memories, regret doing things w/ family when gone- Setting: War with Manchuria, WWII Tokyo

The Destroyers- Graham Greene- T takes over leadership of Wormsley Common (public square) gang from Blackie- T thought Old Misery needed to be brought down to their level; society where everyone has nothing and Old Misery only one with something- Gang destroyed everything on the inside and demolished foundation using truck → easy to destroy without interior- Gang comprised of all children → effect of war: hardening children, no innocence- Setting: Post-WWII London

In the Shadow of War- Ben Okri- Father warns Omovo not to go outside because in midst of war, not safe → doesn't want Omovo to know about war- Woman: seems like a witch; children think she has no shadow and feet don't touch ground; always antagonize her- Omovo intrigued by soldiers → offer him money to tell them

where the woman is but Omovo declines → Omovo wary of them- Omovo saw woman giving a basket to starved, poor women and children → soldiers demanded to know where the “ enemies” were → killed woman- Details seen from child’s perspective of what war is: corpses and what’s left of British colonization Shakespeare’s Sister- Virginia Woolf- Imaginary Judith Shakespeare with same intelligence as brother: goes to London to get taste for theater → laughed at by male workers → actor manager take advantage of her, have child → feel trapped, commit suicide escape agony of genius in woman’s body- Women have to overcome world’s indifference, hostility- Feminist movement of the early 1900’s, men saw women as inferior and incapable of producing such work- Part of A Room of One’s Own – women not influential; never had a room of own to think and have creative freedom, always being watched over- Written when women were trying to get the right to vote in Britain and US Shooting an Elephant- George Orwell- Orwell phoned about elephant gone “ must” → elephant killed someone → found elephant in open field, going to go kill it and whole town followed → shot elephant → opinions vary if he did the right thing but legally okay- Conflict of shooting elephant in field: had to shoot it knowing that all of the Burmans were watching, waiting for meat- Conflict of colonization: hated the Burmese because they made his job difficult, hated the British for suppressing these people- Irony in tyranny: Orwell puppet of natives because had to act tough and enforce law, couldn’t back down- Orwell’s goal was to not look like a fool because lose control of natives No Witchcraft for Sale- Doris Lessing- Teddy = younger white child, Gideon = black cook- When Teddy young, playful relationship and Mrs. Farquar grateful that Gideon looked after her son → became older, Gideon and Mrs. Farquar knew that their kids would never be

of same status (one always boss and one always servant)– Gideon put distance between them – Teddy couldn't say sorry for mistreating Gideon's son because black boy– Snake spit poisoning in Teddy's eyes and saved by Gideon's herbs → white doctors come by hoping to make profit off of it but Gideon never gives them secret because being healer is only thing he can pass to his son– Culture gap: Gideon is from family of healers, important to his community, culture and give status; white doctors would use it to make profit and would ruin tradition and culture– Unique servant-master relationship because mutual respect

Once Upon a Time– Nadine Gordimer– White neighborhood separated from black by apartheid laws (legal separation of races)– “ Once Upon a Time” and other phrases in story hint fairytale → irony: plot isn't child friendly (Gordimer hints at this during intro when saying that she isn't appropriate for child writing)– White family living in neighborhood but afraid of black people coming into home → set up many security measures that don't work– Alarm systems, fences, window bars, razor wire– Serrated fence → son climbs over it to play but is killed from sharp edges– Racism and fear come back to you and hurt yourself

Marriage is a Private Affair– Chinua Achebe– Setting: Lagos, Nigeria– Nnaemeka and Nene married but Okeke (Nnaemeka's father) disapproves because Nene of different tribe and not good Christian as teacher– Okeke want arranged marriage → traditionalist being older generation– Okeke's friends involved: take medicine from native doctor to fix him → Okeke had nothing to do with Nene and Nnaemeka for 8 years– News of happy couple spread; prejudice towards them from all different people– Nene sent letter that she wanted Okeke to see his grandchildren; guilt that he may never be able to make it up to them– Culture gap: traditional older generation vs. modern younger

generation- Irony in title because everyone put in their opinion into this marriage- Rain at end of the story symbolizes rebirth, washing away of old thoughts to finally accept (at least partially) Nnaemeka and his children

Telephone Conversation- Wole Soyinka- Satire: shows ignorance- Black man calling white woman on telephone about renting room → asks is how dark his skin color is → educated black man gives sarcastic answers → she hangs up on him → he wants her to see him for who he is- Theme: racism is ridiculous- Misconception that all whites superior and more intelligent, woman ignorant that each person has different personality and only judging on darkness of skin- Describing different shades of brown skin → mocking racism

The Second Coming- William Butler Yeats- Theme: during second coming, everything will break into chaos- Falcon fly out of control from falconer, everything will break into mere anarchy suggesting that this chaos is normal, war everywhere, no innocence- Second Coming: half-man, half-lion statue; blank stare; slow movements like waking up from long sleep- What will happen when next cycle begins, not peaceful

The Lake Isle of Innisfree- William Butler Yeats- Setting: urban area (pavements gray, roadway); imagining and promising will go to Lake Isle of Innisfree- Tone: peaceful and relaxed; listening to nature's sounds, determined to make his life more simple- Peace = dew in the morning, cricket singing, night glimmering, birds' wings- Not content with city life in London, not as peaceful and relaxed- Ability to go to another place in mind, get away from life in city

The Wild Swans at Coole- William Butler Yeats- Speaker feels sense of nostalgia gazing at swan- " By what lake's edge or pool delight men's eyes when I awake some day to find they have flown away?" = flown to different lake where they delight someone else's eyes- Remembering

years earlier when he first saw them fly in unison- Dark mood = autumn, October, evening closing of day, year meaning darker seasons- Fourth Stanza: speaker envies swans' companionship, freedom, how they seem to be unchanging when his life is so different now- Passage of time, from objective perspective doesn't look like time passing but it is Araby- James Joyce- Speaker reminiscing from childhood: gloomy mood, street quiet and isolated- Araby: imagination (foreign, magical market) vs. reality (workers from Ireland, mostly empty by the time speaker arrives)- Relationship with Mangan's sister: crush, goes to bazaar to buy her something → reach epiphany that doesn't know her well, not true love relationship- Main conflict in story: imagination vs. reality → solve with epiphany The Rocking-Horse Winner- D. H. Lawrence- Luck better than rich because luck always have money but rich may lose it all- Paul lucky when riding rocking-horse, know which horse will win race → Bassett (house servant) and Paul bet on horse and win fortune with Uncle Oscar- House whispering " There must be money!" - children hear it because they are the ones that suffer from their parents frivolous spending- Paul gives money to mother as present → mother spends all of it on house- Paul dies when riding horse, goes into frenzy but predicts winner of race- Rocking-horse = avarice (desire for wealth)- Theme: money can't buy happiness, wealth can't take you anywhere like rocking horse Lot's Wife- Anna Akhmatova- Biblical Allusion: God looks favorably down on Lot, tells him to flee Sodom with family but don't look back → wife turns back and turns her to salt- Lot's wife looked back because she was leaving her past behind; question whether we should waste tears on her because she's least of losses- Theme: cannot let go of our past because it makes us who we are- All the unburies: blame those who exiled

citizens for suffering- I am not one of those who left the land: those who left the land seen as giving up to the enemies; people who stay more proud, honor in staying with roots

The Demon Lover- Elizabeth Owen- Setting: WWII London, German air raids (Mrs. Drover coming back home to collect things) create unsettling mood from beginning- Flashback: Mrs. Drover “love” soldier but can’t remember face, left with scar on her palm from a button on his uniform- Letter waiting in her home from soldier saying that he will be coming home; foreshadowing → ambiguous ending – Mrs. Drover gets in taxi and its soldier that is taking her away- Psychological instability: some argue story could be all imagined- Only when there is war soldier come back into Mrs. Drover’s life

Axolotl- Julio Cortazar- Axolotl: salamander from Mexico, descriptive imagery throughout story such as rosy pink color, antennae-like gills, and mysterious eyes- Sympathizes with axolotls because kept in cramped tanks in aquarium- Visits them constantly for a few weeks, stares at them all day → eventually starts to feel like he is becoming one and imagines seeing his human self staring back at him- Hints that speaker is psychologically imbalanced when using 1st person POV- Theme: seeing things from different perspectives make you more enlightened

The Book of Sand- Jorge Luis Borges- Setting: Buenos Aires, capital of Argentina- Paradox: illustrations in Book of Sand are there and not there, can never find the same page again → contradictions make reader questions reality- Questioning dependable realities: beginning and ending always exist; infinite time and infinite space- Not as good at reading people as character is at reading books, salesman would have given him Book of Sands at any cost yet pays him with entire pension and rare Bible- Book of Sands monstrous because consumes his entire life, hides it in library and can never return

there. B. Wordsworth- V. S. Naipaul- B. Wordsworth says he is greatest poet in the world and boy is poet too- Story of boy and girl fall in love, both poets, girl poet going to have baby but baby and her died, husband sad and never touched a thing in her garden, garden grew high and wild → B. Wordsworth own story, explains why his home looks like jungle in midst of city, lied so wouldn't have boy's sympathy- Poets always try to answer meaning of life- Father-son relationship: escape to B. Wordsworth when being punished by mother- Importance of abstract, colorful thinking as poet Half a Day- Naguib Mahfouz- Allegory: school = life; father = God or creator; woman at school = society tells you when you do something right or wrong; home = beginning and end of life; title = life is short- Foreshadowing: father says that he will pick up son when school has turned him into a man; wants son to be good example and show others how to be a man- Hints that he is older: see familiar face on street and greeting " long time since we last met - how are you?" too formal for kids; younger kid says " Grandpa let me take you across"; all surroundings are different (crowded with people, trash)- Theme: time has no definite meaning, relative to each person Digging- Seamus Heaney- Violent imagery: compares pen to gun, cutting through live roots- Digging through past = intrusive, find something that people are trying to forget- Three generations in family digging: grandfather digging peat, father digging for potatoes, son digging through family's past- Writing and looks out window; remembers his father digging and the sounds of shovel going through dirt, grandfather being one of the best never took breaks; son unlike them → uses pen to dig The Doll's House- Katherine Mansfield- Isabel Burnell: older daughter in rich family, thinks of self as higher status because older so can show friends doll house first- Kezia Burnell: younger daughter in rich

family, understands but doesn't want to follow social classes, tries to show house to Kelvey sisters, fascinated by lamp → appreciates little things in life-

Lil Kelvey: older sister in poor family- Else Kelvey: younger sister in poor

family, hardly spoke but speaks last line “ I seen the little lamp” → realizes

place in society, will never go up or amount to anything- Lamp, light with so

many fine details = symbolize enlightenment- Kezia only one that belongs in

world; could survive without wealth, status Musee des Buex Arts- W. H.

Auden- Title is Fine Arts Museum in Belgium- Old Masters = painters of past,

saying how they understood suffering and people stand by and do nothing in

presence of others' pain- References to birth and crucifixion of Jesus:

describe suffering with elevated language but people's attitude casual tone-

Painting of Icarus falling from sky – boat going the other way, peasant

plowing field, Icarus small part of painting in corner like afterthought → how

could they ignore screams or splash into water?- Theme: concerned more for

ourselves, trying to assure our own survival before trying to help other-

Tone: critical of man, indifferent Fear- Gabriela Mistral- Speaker: parent with

daughter, doesn't want her to grow up and become better than family that

she will not come back home thinking she is above them- Don't want her to

be swallow (migratory bird = drift too far away from home), don't want her

to be princess or queen = high status, never associate across social classes-

Repetition sounds like prayer, begging- “ Them” = any force that will make

daughter grow up- Theme: parent fearing that they would lose child to adult

life; irony in parents not wanting daughter to be successful and stay in lower

class with them because usually want them to succeed Fern Hill- Dylan

Thomas- Imagery: use alliterations and onomatopoeia to describe animals

and life in rural setting/farm- Allusion to Adam and Eve: when child, state of

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innocence not exposed to adult world → leaving, loss of innocence, child understands death- Time personified as parental figure, allow speaker to play- Theme: everyone has childhood experience of being carefree, “ young and easy”, “ ran my heedless ways” → not noticing danger and worries, prince of apple town- “ Time held me green and dying”: young as child but dying as time passes on Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night- Dylan Thomas- Wise men = no mark on world with knowledge; good men = not enough good deeds; wild men = world deteriorating while living in prime of their life; grave men = will never have impact- “ Good night” = death; contradiction because good but want father to fight it; pun because casual good-bye but serious topic- “ Bless me with your tears”: wants father to show him how to live life by doing it himself, inherit that attitude- Hatred toward death because takes away life when haven’t accomplished everything you wanted to do yet, could have done so much more- Elegy: serious thought/meditation about consequence of death; mourning death of father and how he should have fought Sonnet 79- Pablo Neruda- Central metaphor tying hearts together – forever united in love, hearts beat as one- “ Night travel”, darkness: unknown, fear but can conquer together- “ Wings of a swan underwater”: covered beauty, heart beat underneath is beautiful; constant, unchanging, heartbeat = pure- Double drum: means of communication, even in darkness hearts still connected- Two lovers will always be united by pure love- Sonnet always has turn: octet darkness and love strong enough to conquer night, sestet lightness and love beautiful and pure Like the Sun- R. K. Narayan- Sekhar resolves to tell absolute truth because need strength to be honest no matter what; conflict between telling truth and what people want to hear- Sekhar critiques headmaster’s music if

given extra time to grade papers → tells headmaster performance awful → headmaster thanks him for critique and needs papers by tomorrow– Irony: said thank you for truth but probably wasn't thankful; could've been worse punishment (being fired instead of grading papers all night)– Sekhar is resolute, naïve– Theme: people don't always want to hear the truth; consequences of telling truth – could lose everything (Harischandra)Games at Twilight– Anita Desai– Kids playing hide-and-seek – Ravi hides in dark, scary shed and wants to win so stays there a long time → finally comes out thinking he won but others forgot about him and started another game– “Remember when I'm dead”; tragic because can't remember Ravi when he's alive– Ravi in shed: don't know what's going to happen like in life → build suspense– End of story Ravi learns he is insignificant, tough thing to learn as a child, change outlook of world from carefree and happy to dark– Mood/Emotion: loss, death, insignificance, loneliness– Theme: at some point, come to conclusion that world is dark, adult pressuresNext Term, We'll Mash You– Penelope Lively– Manders visit boarding school → headmaster, wife condescending towards Charles, insignificant → boys will mash him because beat up new kids → decide Charles is going there without his opinion– Parents distant with Charles, more concerned about own status than son; school is great way to make connections with rich City folk– Headmaster and wife distant with students– Charles concerned he won't have friends, parents aren't concerned about what Charles is worried about– Theme: gap between parents and child and what each of them wantSaboteur– Ha Jin– Mr. Chiu arrested by police officers who disrupted peace when throw tea on Mr. Chiu and wife's shoes → wife sends Fenjin, former student and new lawyer, to save Mr. Chiu but gets tortured too → signs statement of guilt to save Fenjin–

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Irony: Mr. Chiu arrested for disturbing peace when only meant to handle situation in civilized manner- Mr. Chiu hepatitis, eats at all food carts and spreads disease to whole city → angry at police officers, other witnesses that say he was at fault but many innocent people still died or infected with disease- Remained optimistic but gloomy mood because sitting in prison; try to find peace of mind so hepatitis doesn't destroy body further- Revolving cycle of injustice