

Graham greene's the destructors

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This short story by Graham Greene is a critical yet humorous one in which a group of young teenagers have formed a gang in post-blitz London and plot to tear down the only symbolic house left standing after a bombing raid leveled an area. It would be wise to look at the characters and their influence in this short story and the results they have on various subsequent viewpoints that the reader will see.

Main Characters: Trevor or T. is the protagonist in the story as the plot revolves around his actions and decisions. Defining the antagonist is a bit more complicated, since we can look at the Old Misery's house as an antagonist but deeper inspection could point one to recognise that the fact that society's current state is perhaps more accurate. Trevor is looking to destroy the house as it is a symbol for hope for society as it has survived the war and thus the two are working against each other; Trevor against society.

A picture from Blitzed London to show the grey despair The name Trevor is common and isn't anything special, whereas T. creates a sense of power and leadership. This could show that the gang might not accept society's values of a birth name and thus alter it to suite their acceptance. When Blackie calls T., Trevor, the reader can sense the shift in power between the leaders.

How Suspense is created: Suspense is created throughout this story, perhaps most obviously when the gang questions T. of his whereabouts and T.'s responses are short and curtailed, with his eyes looking down as shown by 'He looked at the ground, as though he had thoughts to hide.' The manner of his short responses creates tension and in turn suspense, this reaches a climax when 'T raised his eyes, as grey and disturbed as the drab August day.' this sentence confirms the author's build up of tension and thus the

<https://assignbuster.com/graham-greenes-the-destructors/>

reader focuses on the following 'We'll pull it down' which is central to the story.

Suspense is expanded upon later in the story by the premature return of Old Misery and T's breakdown and the subsequent 'He protested with the jury of the child he had never been.' is completely against T's previous way of acting and this sudden change creates suspense while also showing the uncanny or unnatural view that Trevor never had a childhood in which he behaved like a child.

Why is the setting so significant? In many short stories there is not enough time for authors to build up a interesting setting that adds significant value to the plot. Yet, Greene uses a blitzed, grey, downcast London; a city with little hope as a central and important focus point. The setting in turn shapes the characters and their fellow gang members and might be responsible for their willingness to destroy this beautiful house. The house stands as a symbol of hope and triumph over adversity and thus serves the community.

The humor present: There is plenty of humor present in this short story, most notably by the Top Hat that is identified by the lorry driver and is amusing considering in is worn by a man who was locked in a loo, whose house had just fallen down and the top hat should be a symbol ironically of high society.

T. tells Old Misery 'There's nothing personal' just before he tears his house down and after that, upon seeing the house torn up, the lorry driver coincidentally repeats the exact same line after openly laughing at Mr Thomas' predicament. One might find humor in the fact that 'There's nothing

personal' shows that the destruction was not personal for T. but was deeply personal for Mr Thomas.

What does this short story show? The author uses the story to show the underlying need for destruction present in human nature, and our ability to destroy beautiful objects for pointless reasons. The destruction of the house is seen as pointless in itself since nothing is gained.

Post-war London's changing social structure could also show the fact that the youth is no longer as connected to the past as previous generations. Thus changing social dynamics and shifting power between generations is an integral part of this story.