

A complicated
kindness – perplexing
passages essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

4. Quotation/Summary| My thoughts| In chapter six, Nomi creates a very vivid memory of watching two black Mennonite dresses “ flying around like crazy birds way up in the sky”. As she watched them fly all the way to her grandmother’s yard where she was, she remained fascinated, calling that, “ even the best thing that ever happened to her. ” She then said goodbye to the fallen dress when the spectacular show ended, like a little child who didn’t know the difference between a dress and a person. Shortly after recalling that memory, she asks Travis to stop by her grandma’s place so she can search for the dress.

I chose these two scenes to discuss why I found their significance confusing and how I interpreted it. | My first reaction to Nomi’s memory of the two flying black dresses was one of slight confusion, as I wondered why this memory would be of such importance to her. She spoke highly of watching the dresses, saying, “ it was the best thing that ever happened to me...”. What was more perplexing was when she went back and searched for the other black dress that had landed on top of her grandmother’s barn, yet ended up disappointed when it wasn’t there.

This is a different side of Nomi displayed here, as she usually tries to keep up a tough facade while speaking of the many depressing memories in her life. It caused me to think that she is perhaps in that stage of adolescence where we cling to the memories of our childhood and pursue a connection of our past selves to our present and future selves. This could be one of her favourite memories because she felt watching the dresses was so real and fascinating as a child, that she wants to experience the same sense of freedom the two dresses displayed while dancing in the wind.

In another sense, the strong wind almost seemed to be liberating the two black Mennonite dresses from the constricting clothesline. In this perspective, it could almost be like Tash and Trudie were symbolized by the two dresses, and Nomi felt the urge to keep them near when she feverishly combed the barn in search. After reading these passages, I have been able to gain much insight into Nomi and the author's style of writing because it caused me to think about deeper symbolisms in what she saw and experienced. | 2. Quotation/Summary| My thoughts|

On page 100 and at the conclusion of chapter twelve, Nomi has gone to her bedroom and has begun to pray to God. She does this physically in a similar manner as she did when she was a young girl, by holding her hands to her forehead and kneeling by her bed. She says she doesn't know who she is or what she wants, but does want God to save her as soon as possible. She continues to have trouble forming a proper prayer, so she lies on her bed after concluding it quickly. I have chosen the topic of faith in relation to this passage because Nomi is still in search of her own faith. This particular passage strikes me as one providing proof of how lost and broken Nomi is while searching for a new faith. It gives another perspective into faith and provides justification behind Nomi's thoughts and actions. Nomi's current view of God is not one of favour, as she says he has a terrible reputation while praying to him. It is notable, though, how she has decided to pray to him after such a long while since she last did. Nomi is generally portrayed as resilient and strong in character. She doesn't normally allow the impact of the tragedies faced in her life to be openly displayed.

From this, I can only assume she is looking to God for some sort of answer and guidance to all the troubles she's had. I find Nomi's brooding similar to the content of a song, "Welcome to my life" by Simple Plan, in which the person being spoken of is lost, depressed and strongly dislikes the people and places surrounding him/her. The lyrics in the first verse and chorus can be strongly connected to Nomi's current situation: "Do you ever feel like breaking down/ Do you ever feel out of place/ Like somehow you don't belong and no one understands you/ Do you ever want to run away. " Chorus: "To be hurt/ To be lost/ To be left out in the dark. I think these words vividly express Nomi's feelings and how lost she's become in the absence of Tash and Trudie. This event of her trying to pray to God like she did so openly in her childhood destroys the image of a strong-willed, rebellious girl, and replaces it with one of a broken girl clinging to what little faith she has while desperately in search of a new hope. This provides a new insight into Nomi as she, who so rarely refers to her faith in a positive manner, humbly looks to her faith to provide solutions when for so long it has simply filled her heart with questions. 3. Quotation/Summary| My thoughts| "This town is so severe. And silent. It makes me crazy, the silence. I wonder if a person can die from it. There's an invisible force that exerts a steady pressure on our words like a hand to an open, spurting wound. " (Pg. 4)" He gathered up a mouthful of saliva and horked it far across the water. It got caught up in a gentle breeze and hung suspended in mid-air. It sparkled in the sun like a tiny chandelier before it dropped softly and disappeared. " (Pg. 5)| Simile and Hyperbole: I noticed this portion of the book immediately because it is such a different style of writing than I am accustomed to reading. It is easy to picture what the author is describing because it is so

<https://assignbuster.com/a-complicated-kindness-perplexing-passages-essay/>

expressive, and accomplishes what it needs to in such simplicity. I think the author chose to express herself this way because it has such a powerful impact on the reader by being so dramatic. It also adds more of a heightened effect through its exaggeration, even though realistically a town cannot be as silent as Nomi says: there will still be sound being made as long as the city has life.

The use of a simile and hyperbole together makes it easier to understand what Nomi is feeling. Having this unexpected comparison of an invisible force of silence likened to a hand on a wound causes the writing to become fresh and unique. Simile and Imagery: This particular section caught my attention swiftly because it is such a unique comparison of taking something like saliva, normally viewed as disgusting, to comparing it to a something as beautiful as a glass chandelier.

This part of the novel accomplishes its goal because it left a picture of the scene in my mind after I read it because I found it so striking. The description of this incident here uses a lot of imagery and so it becomes more impactful for the senses. The imagery is used with a striking effect by changing the atmosphere of the scene from being insipid to a more impressive one, which contributes to the overall mood of the text. The author may have chosen to use this figurative language because readers are interested in things to which they can relate.

The author, by creating imagery that makes a connection, made the writing better and grabbed me with an emotional hook. | 1. Quotation/Summary| My thoughts| Lydia is Nomi's one true friend, who she can share her thoughts

and secrets with and not worry about what is thought of her. I chose Lydia because I share a similar relationship with a close friend of mine. Lids, as Nomi refers to her, is currently in the hospital and Nomi tries to visit often. In the way she describes Lydia I was quickly able to make a connection to the scene and thought of my friend when I read it. Lydia was straight-edge but completely disarmingly, non-judgmental. We had nothing in common. I just liked her evanescence and the way she did the most unbelievably nerdy things without knowing it or if she did know it and she didn't care at all". (Pg. 32)| Nomi's relationship with her friend Lydia reminds me of my own friendship with a girl of the same age. Similar to these characters, my friend and I are childhood friends and remain friends to this day.

Although I am nothing like Nomi, I can easily compare Lydia to my friend. Unlike Lydia, who has an unknown life threatening disease, my friend's indisposition is of multiple problems including dyslexia and hypoglycemia. This aspect has encouraged our friendship to develop because I enjoyed acting as a mentor and supporter to my friend. To help her learn to appreciate the joy of learning, I encouraged her in the process of learning how to read and write so everyone could understand her thoughts.

I share many similarities with my friend, but just like the author created Lydia and Nomi, using the method of juxtaposition, we too are very contrasting in personalities. My friend is more unpredictable and audacious whereas I am reserved and quiet. Alike to Lydia, in her creation of unique costumes, outfits, and poems for Nomi, my friend is very creative, which can be seen not only in her artwork but in her style as well. For instance, she wears bold colors and patterns and still looks acceptable.

I admire my friend's ability to not follow the crowd and not being concerned with what others think about her. This can be related to how Nomi feels about Lydia when she states why she likes Lydia's due to the way: " she did the most unbelievably nerdy things without knowing it or if she did know it and she didn't care at all". From this touching scene of Nomi finally able to express her caring feelings for someone who will always be there in return, I found it much easier to connect with the characters of this novel because I try to be always kind and thoughtful to anyone I come in association with. |