

Analysis of "the grave" essay



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An Analysis of " The Grave" The grave is the story of a young girl named Miranda who goes exploring and hunting with her brother Paul, one afternoon.

Upon trespassing onto private property that their family had sold, and inspecting some empty gravesites, both Paul and Miranda find hidden treasures inside the empty earth. Both had something the other sibling admired, Paul a thin, golden ring and Miranda a silver dove. After trading their discovered items, and returning to their hunt, the reader is able to see more clearly the change that takes place in Miranda.

Initially seen as a boyish young girl, unconcerned with behaving in a feminine mannerism, we see her transform after putting the beautifully designed ring on her finger. The central idea of " The Grave" is that people live up to the expectations placed on them, by both others and themselves.

" The Grave" is told from a totally omniscient point of view, as the narrator is able to describe the inner thoughts from all characters within the story. However, the main focus is on Miranda who is the primary character within the story. She presents a dynamic character, showing growth and change as the story continues to unfold.

As the story begins, she is a young girl who unquestioningly follows her brother to go hunting, listening to his advice so as not to have the gun accidentally go off, and wearing the exact same uniform, so to speak, in order to keep her school dresses clean. We do, however, see that her interest is not actually that of hunting, but rather the sheer excitement and exercise she gets from going along with her brother; " What I like about shooting,"

said Miranda, with exasperating inconsequence, " is pulling the trigger and hearing the noise.

The following sentence details how she prefers to go with her brother versus shooting on the range because she is able to walk around more. We also see that at one point she feels ashamed at her attire simply because she has offended some elderly women in the town by dressing down so much. This is significant because we are able to observe that she is very much concerned with what others think of her, and that peer pressure does in fact have an impact on her thoughts and attitude. After reading the passage where the old women have criticized Miranda, we are also allowed to see her line of reasoning for her attire to be acceptable.

Her father has justified her dressing down in overalls by appealing to her upbringing that it is a sin to be wasteful. What I mean by this, is that she sees her lack of femininity as a way to save her school dresses from the rough terrain, and thus save money.

However, we do see that she still feels ashamed for offending the older women. This shows an internal conflict that she is destined to offend someone no matter what, and in that regard, she will no doubt feel some sense of disobedience and discomfort due to her " powerful social sense. Another internal conflict we see is that after discovering the beautiful ring, Miranda suddenly has a craving to be more of a girly-girl, dressing up more and withdrawing from her desire to follow around her brother. The conflict presented in this situation, is that she suddenly feels more responsibility in the role she has played as hunter.

This is especially reflected when she insists upon looking at the recently killed rabbit that was pregnant.

She seems repulsed and sickened when she sees the blood covering them, and it is as if she sees the cost of her ignorance in their scarlet covering; it is then and there that she states she no longer wants the rabbit fur, thus putting away her previously irresponsible childhood. The setting also provides an interesting background in which this story has been built, because it shows that even in pure and absolute nature, there are always consequences and costs to actions. After all of this, it is also important to note that the tone of the story seems to be almost bittersweet.

In my opinion, it gives off the impression that losing one's innocence is both heartbreaking, but necessary and good for the soul. One example that clearly expresses this is the following passage: " It was a very hot day and the smell in the market, with its piles of raw flesh and wilting flowers, was like the mingled sweetness and corruption she had smelled that other day in the empty cemetery at home..." What is so important is the contrast between adjectives; sweetness versus corruption.

Later on we see this again when she thinks upon how the " dreadful vision faded. We clearly see that this was a difficult memory, but also one from the past that led her to her present beliefs and person. We are also given a vivid impression of the exact moment her youthful transformation took place. " She was quietly and terribly agitated, standing again with her rifle under her arm, looking down at the bloody heap. " The wording here completely

suggests both responsibility and remorse for the present situation, even though she simply went along with it.

This also shows the tremendous change that she underwent after having found the ring and thus put in a position to more clearly think about her personal standing.

We can, however, most clearly see a reflection of the central idea with the following sentence, which takes place directly after her brother instructed her to remain quiet about the day's events: " Then it sank quietly into her mind and was heaped over by accumulated thousands of impressions, for nearly twenty years. " This one sentence, especially where it specifically states " accumulated impressions" shows that the main character is living primarily based on the environment around her. In other words, that people live up to the expectations that are placed on them.