

Jude college essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Little Father Time has just hanged himself and the other two children. Jude and Sue have just come across this scene of horror. Hardy cuts “ upon the floor, on which was written, in the boy’s hand, with the bit..

. ” into short segments with commas giving the narration a breathless effect. It demonstrates Jude and Sue’s feelings towards the scene they have just witnessed. These commas also fashion the sentence as if it were being spoken by a child.

There is no complex diction in this passage so it reflects the innocence of the children involved, which is quite a contrast from the adult and gothic language such as “ half paralyzed” and “ grotesque and hideous horror” used in the last paragraph. There is a pattern that emerges so whenever the narrator describes the scene (usually the most horrific parts), he uses simple, unadorned, monosyllabic words, i. e. “ the little bed”, and – placing the negative first – “ no children were there”.

However, when describing the parents’ reaction, he uses more complicated and descriptive lexis. This gives rise to an unnerving, disturbing feeling for the reader. The note written to Jude and Sue by Little Father Time, “ Done because we are too menny” explains clearly, why he had performed this task. This is a succinct, poignant note written with what is either no feeling whatsoever or overwhelming but repressed emotion.

However, “ menny” indicates the pure innocence and child-like quality of Little Father Time and it shows us the level of his education. Menny’ incorporates the word ‘ men’ and his ignorance of spelling may signify his ignorance of the ways of man. Perhaps in the word ‘ Done’ there is a

resonance of Macbeth's "If it were done when 'tis done" (Act I scene VII) emphasizing the horrific finality and decisiveness to Little Father Time's actions. Sue provoked Little Father Time into reflecting along these lines of their being too many of them due to her conversation with him in the last few pages. He asks, "It would almost be better to be out o' the world than in it, wouldn't it?", and she off-handedly replies, "It would almost, dear."

"This careless reply and its tragic ramification is a result of Sue's narcissism and the solipsistic nature of both the parents towards Little Father Time. The language now becomes more elaborate and graphic as the children are no longer mentioned and the following paragraphs concern merely Jude and Sue. Sue realizes her careless words were responsible for Little Father Time's actions. Her 'convulsive agony' that "knew no abatement" is powerfully personified, and implies that she is in the grip of someone who refuses to let go. The syntax, ending in the stark phrase "no abatement" makes Sue's feeling even more infinite and absolute. She is so distraught that the woman of the house is "vainly trying to soothe her", with her "eyes staring at the ceiling".

She seems to be undergoing an out-of-body experience. She is not to go upstairs because "her presence might do harm"; the intensive shock may also lead to endangering "a coming life", her unborn baby would be the only child left in her life. Sue confesses she believes herself responsible for this and Jude replies "It was in his nature to do it..."

unknown in the last generation": This is an allusion to a number of views and theories. Thomas Malthus published "An essay on the principle of

population” in 1798. In it he argued against population growth. He believed that if one cannot afford to raise children, one should not bring them into the world.

Jude quotes the doctor who says that such boys were not heard of in the last generation. Here, Darwin’s ‘The Origin of Species’ (1859) is being alluded to. Darwin proved humans are not special creatures chosen by God, but instead, simply animals that are highly evolved and well adapted to their surroundings. Hardy stresses the way that Little Father Time had struck at the conventional views of Victorian family life and instead of having the typical morals of a little boy, believed that survival was more important than family values. I believe that Little Father Time is in a sense more ‘highly evolved’ than Jude – Jude attempted to commit suicide and failed. Little Father Time however, did so – he is a child brought up without love.

The use of the words “springing up” make this new type of child seem linked to regeneration, growth, felicity and seasonality, but in fact they bring death and are the product of “new views of life”. Of course Sue herself is a product of such views which perhaps have affected Little Father Time subconsciously. He never shows any signs of hope, happiness, excitement and general strong emotions until his last conversation with Sue, and even then he gives us no impression that he is going to murder his brother and sister and commit suicide. The child is an example of “the coming universal wish not to live” Jude states bleakly. This phrase demonstrates the thematic pessimism in the narrative, the apocalyptic nature of Little Father Time, and the fast approaching, universal nihilistic views of the end of the century. At the end

of Jude's version of the doctor's analysis of Little Father Time, the text ends with an aposiopesis: "consolations to -".

Jude's composure cracks. Ironically, Jude stops short just as he mentions, "(the doctor) can give no consolation", the phrase 'no consolation' extends Hardy's apocalyptic theme of lack of hope. We find out Jude has composed himself for Sue, but could do so no longer, and in her efforts to comfort him, "distracted her from her poignant self-reproach". Hardy describes what Sue sees when she is allowed to finally see the children. Little Father Time's face "expressed the whole tale of their situation" which is clearly, death, despair, struggle, lack of love, and lack of hope.

Linking the boy's face to their situation describes them both perfectly well without describing either. The use of simple, unadorned language describing the boy as a 'little shape' shows us that the small boy is not yet defined, he is not yet delineated; he dies young and unformed. Hardy writes that in Little Father Time he "had converged all the inauspiciousness of Jude". The child's corpse conveyed the suggestion of the tragedy, despair and death that was looming in his relationship with Arabella, as well "all the accidents.

.. errors of the last"; the potent and tragic element of fate is stressed. Little Jude's description as his parent's 'nodal point' demonstrates that he is an entanglement where 'inauspiciousness' and the lack of love have become enmeshed.

The paragraph concludes with a tricolon, "For the rashness of those parents he had groaned, for their ill-assortment he has quaked, and for the misfortunes of these he had died". This relates to Jude's relationships with

Arabella and Sue, and Little Father Time's short life; it is a conclusive and tragic summation of Little Father Time's short life and tragic end. This scene hints at Hardy's disaffection with God, and when Jude and Sue overhear the psalm " Truly God is loving unto Israel" we realize this disaffection is very tangible.