

# The cold equations

Business



Have you ever learned something the hard way? Marilyn, in the “Cold Equations” certainly did. Marilyn had to die in order to learn that she should tell people how she feels about them and say sorry for things she has done. Also, she learns the hard way that the laws of nature are unforgiving and cold. Tom Godwin (author of “The Cold Equations”) uses a unique theme, futuristic setting, situational irony and chilling symbols to tell the story of two strangers who get caught up in a deadly situation and to teach an important life lesson. To begin with, Godwin uses a unique theme to teach a life lesson. Marilyn, who must die, learns you should always tell people how you feel about them when you can. On page 24 Marilyn states “...when you’re young and your life is all before you— you’re so afraid of sounding sentimental and silly.

But it’s so different when you have to die— you wish you had told them while you could, and you wish you could tell them you’re sorry for all the little mean things you ever did or said to them.” In this part of the story, Marilyn has already accepted her impending death and is realizing the mistake she made in not telling people how she feels about them. This lesson learned by Marilyn is very important and should not be ignored. We need to tell people we love them, thank them, and say sorry for what we did to hurt them while we still have time. Likewise, Godwin uses a futuristic setting to teach us a lesson of nature. The space frontier is desolate and must abide by the strict, cruel laws of nature.

On page 21 Godwin writes “The laws were, and the universe moved in obedience to them.” He is stating that the laws of nature have no morals;

they are how they are and that is why Marilyn had to die. Another lesson Godwin teaches is that the laws of nature know no ethics or emotion. Accordingly, white is a symbol that shows up many times in Godwin's "The Cold Equations," to tie together both of the lessons learned. White can be used to show the innocence of Marilyn and the coldness of the laws of nature.

Thus, tying together both the lessons of telling people how you feel when you have time and that the laws of nature are cold and unforgiving. Godwin mentions white multiple times. On page 10 he writes, "He let his eyes rest on the narrow white door of the closet." In this part of the story, they are about to find Marilyn in the white closet, representing the coldness of the impending situation and the death of an innocent girl. White, both a symbol for coldness and innocence, is perfect for the chilling story by Tom Godwin.

The symbol of white ties together both lessons. Nature is unforgiving and cold, you may be innocent but it can take you at any moment, so tell people how you feel when you have time. Lastly, Godwin incorporates situational irony into the story to emphasize the drama of Marilyn's death. The fact that she has to die for nothing is situational irony because we expect a better outcome for Marilyn. On page 14, Godwin writes "You're going to make me die and I didn't do anything to die for — I didn't do anything——."

Godwin is using a statement from Marilyn to show the irony in her death.

Situational irony is incorporated into this statement and is used to make the readers feel more emotion, so they can truly feel effect of the writing and learn the lesson of telling people how you feel while you still can. In

conclusion, Mr. Godwin's "The Cold Equations" tells the story of two strangers caught up in a deadly situation. The unique theme incorporates two lessons, Marilyn, who has to die for nothing learns the hard way that you should show others how you feel when you can and that the laws of nature are unforgiving. The futuristic setting of the space frontier provides an eerie and lonely feeling to the already chilling story.

White comes up at many places in the story as a symbol. In "The Cold Equations," white symbolizes the innocence of Marilyn and cold laws of nature. Godwin incorporates situational irony into "The Cold Equations" by making Marilyn a smiling, innocent girl in her teens, "the unwanted factor in a cold equation." In other words, she has to die for nothing. Nature is unforgiving, it could take anyone at anytime, so be sure to tell people how you feel, thank them, apologize and love them while you still have time.