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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Infinity Mirror "Tularecito" is a myth about truth. Tularecito, just a character of that myth, is the focus for this glossed over fable. Steinbeck draws on this form of genre to present the idea that we are all a part of what happens to others, based upon our nature. The image presented of Tularecito is that of a demon, an idiot savant, a boy with a gift from God, and that gift's cost. He is a freak, a dangerous misfit, an innocent who does not need the constraints of reality. Tularecito is a test.

The test is one of moral caliber. It is a test of the souls of the characters who overshadow Tularecito. Pancho is a man that is both holy and sinful.

His purfunctory act of church going becomes true belief as alcohol demons induce him to hallucinate a deformed boy into an outcast from hell. He looks into his mirror and sees himself, becomes shaken, reforms. From Pancho's employer, Franklin Gomez, we get a cold hard look into society. We see a mother, knowing her son is to be hated and feared, and perhaps possibly killed, cannot face killing her son with her bare hands. She leaves the killing to exposure to the elements, enying herself a look into Tularecito.

Franklin adopts Pancho's demon, and Tularecito transforms into a disadvantaged who has been gifted with talent. Tularecito becomes a man at the age of six, "The boy grew rapidly, but after the fifth year his brain did not grow any more," To Franklin, Tularecito is grace, and graceless. He is talented in all things of any physical strength, and well proficient in the creation of beauty, and an artist in the care for life of nature. The touch of Tularecito brings beauty, and life, and love to the world, until he becomes enraged, (should anyone endanger what came from the touch of his hand).

Franklin looked into Tularecito's mirror and saw what Tularecito was.

Authority views come from several directions. While one teacher sees

Tularecito as a Pavlovian dog, needing to be trained, the other sees him as an idiot savant, needing only to be pushed into harmless fantasy. This leads a third view of Tularecito, one of a simple minded killer that needs to be locked up for his own good.

Tularecito is viewed as less than human from the start. His name means "little frog", and his physical disabilities are seen by all, causing fear.

Tularecito is a noble savage. Dangerous to look at but hiding the soul of God, he is intimidating, a creator, and dangerously temperamental.

As Steinbeck weaves his tale, it is obviously full of metaphors on the basic belief of our society that everything must be forced into a plausible category, fit for inclusion into the human race. Tularecito should never have gone to school. He would have been happy living at home, simple as he was.

In the end society takes Tularecito and makes him a monster. Since monsters are not allowed into human society, Tularecito goes looking for a different society that he does belong to. Unfortunately this society does not exist.

Tularecito has no control over his perceptions of reality and fantasy. He searches for a world of fantasy, and in his efforts, he creates a hole.

When this hole is covered up, it confirms Tularecito's belief in fantasy.

Tularecito creates another hole, and waits for his fantasy to show. Tularecito has only one flaw. He believes that what he created should not be destroyed.

Whenever this happens, should it be school, work, or fantasy, Tularecito

defends his creations with the only thing he can understand, violence. It is not like true, calculated violence, but very much like a motor nerve reaction.

He reacts with pure emotion and pain, and eventually he kills. Steinbeck tells an interesting story with Tularecito as a mirror. In fact, all the characters in the story are mirrors. As we look at them we see how we measure against them. But Tularecito is a mirror with an infinity of sides. He is a tool for testing human beliefs, one of which is that sometimes, it is better to leave things alone than to try to force them into our mirror image of how they should exist.

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