

The remains of the  
day by kazuo ishiguro  
and a fragment of  
stained glass by d h  
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The two books I have chosen to compare are *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro and *A Fragment of Stained Glass* by D. H. Lawrence. This essay, will give a brief outline of both text, I have studied, and show any similarities or differences, I have found between them. Kazuo Ishiguro wrote *The Remains of the Day* and had his book first published in 1989.

He was a post war time writer. The story is set in the summer of 1956. Our narrator and lead character is an ageing butler called Stevens. The story is of Stevens six day trip to the westcountry.

During his travels, he reflects over his past history, remembering his old, now dead employer, Lord Darlington. Stevens is also remembering about Lord Darlington's old housekeeper Miss Kenton whom which he now has very deep feelings for and is hoping to see during the course of his journey. D. H. Lawrence wrote *A Fragment of Stained Glass* in 1914, obviously sometime before.

Lawrence was a pre war writer. The story is really broken into two parts. The first part is set in a vicarage of Beauvale where a vicar called Mr Colbran who is also an archaeologist and his guest are both dining. The vicar's guest is the original narrator. However the second part of the story is told by the vicar himself. The vicar tells his own written story.

The vicar's story narrator is a stable boy. The story tells about how the stable boy murdered a horse which then led to a chain reaction of events which caused the young stable boy to flee for his life. The vicar then becomes the main narrator as he reads his story to his guest with no interruptions. Both stories are written in the first narrative, even though Lawrence manages to  
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change the narrator of his story half way through. Both stories are very descriptive as to what our narrators are feeling and thinking.

In *The Remains of the Day* Stevens is always analysing his thoughts and questioning his own motives and actions. Looking at the next passage taken from the book we can see an example of Stevens over analytical mind." I made my exit, and it was not until after I had done so that it occurred to me I had not actually offered her my condolences. I could well imagine the blow the news would be like to her, her aunt having been, to all intents and purposes, like a mother to her, and I paused out in the corridor, wondering if I should go back, knock and make good my omission. But then it occurred to me that if I were to do so, I might easily intrude upon her private grief.

Indeed it was not impossible that Miss Kenton, at that very moment, and only a few feet from me, was actually crying." As seen here, Stevens is fretting about his decision and pondering about how and if he should rectify it. In the other book, the vicar is really telling us a story. A story within a story can be quite complicated.

It is the vicar's story I aim to concentrate on. As explained above the vicar has chosen a stable boy to play his narrator. The stable boy is also a worrier but has good cause to be. He set his masters barn alight which consequentley set fire to the house. Due to his actions the stable boy is now a fugitive on the run. As a hunted man he feels threatened by all.

" As the fire went down I got frightened. I ran for the woods, with fire blazing in my eyes and crackling in my ears. For hours I was the fire. Then I went to

sleep under the bracken. When I woke it was evening. I had no mantle, was frozen stiff.

I was afraid to move, lest all the sores of my back should be broken like thin ice." Unlike Stevens the butler, the stable boy is more interested in himself and his feelings rather than that of the people he may or may not have just killed. Both characters's had love interests too. The stable boy is in love with Marther the millers daughter. Throughout his ordeal he seeks the help of Marther and she too is loyal in her love for him. She brings him food and a knife and also decides to join him, so as to help him evade capture.

The next passage illustrates just how much the stable boy thought of Marther." I lay her down till cut flat hairy boughs. I put her in my bosom on this dry bed so we swooned together through the night. I laced her round and covered her with myself so she lay like a nut within it's shell.

' Again when morning came, it was pain of cold that woke me. I groaned, but my heart was warm as I saw the heap of red hair in my arms." Both narrators had some one they loved. In Stevens case it was more love at a distance. After the departure of Miss Kenton (the old housekeeper at Darlington hall) Stevens realised that after all these years he was actually in love with her. Stevens realisation comes to little to late as Miss Kenton has now married.

What makes it worse for Stevens is he now realises Miss Kenton had loved him for year but he had been too caught up in his work and sense of duty to realise it. Their relationship was one of petty squabbling and nit picking but nevertheless this seemed to make no difference to their feelings except

maybe enhanced them. Both characters are always picking holes in each  
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others personas and over-reacting to the simplest of requests. The next passage illustrates just how tiresome Stevens could behave and how he could over react to the slightest of remarks.

“ After several minutes of my talking and her contributing only statements such as, ‘ of course Mr Stevens,’ or ‘ I quite agree, Mr. Stevens’ I finally said to her:” I am sorry, Miss Kenton, but I see little point in our continuing. You simply do not seem to appreciate the importance of this discussion.”” I’m sorry, Mr Stevens,” she said, sitting up a little. “ it’s simply that I’m rather tired this evening.

“” You are increasingly tired now Miss Kenton. It used not to be an excuse you needed to resort to” To my sudden astonishment, Miss Kenton responded to this in a sudden burst:” Mr Stevens, I have had a very busy week. I am very tired. In fact I have been wishing for my bed for the last three or four hours.

I am very, very tired, Mr. Stevens, can you not appreciate that?” He thoroughly enjoyed his new meetings at the end of the day and was feeling hurt that Miss Kenton was not giving him the full amount of attention he deserved. However after this conversation Stevens decided to cancel any such meeting in the future. In other words he cut of his nose to spite his face.

The narrator Stevens, is an unreliable narrator. Unreliable narrators are invariably invented characters who are part of the stories they tell. The use of one is so the writer can find an interesting way to bridge the gap between

appearance and reality. Stevens is a man whose whole life has been based on the suppression and evasion of truth, about himself and others.

Throughout the story he avoids the fact that his previous employer Lord Darlington was actually a supporter of Hitler and his fascist regime. This illustrates how Stevens was a loyal man and that even though he is no longer employed by Lord Darlington he still had no bad words to say about him. The stable boy also held a certain type of loyalty from Marther the millers daughter. As shown in the previous excerpt he made sure she was kept dry and sheltered from the weather but in this next passage we see how Marther made sure he had all he needed for his escape and the fact the stable boy recognised her loyalty to him.

“ When I woke, she was rocking me wildly to rouse me. ‘ ” I dreamed,” said I, ” that a great heap, as if it were a hill, lay on me and above me.”“ She put a cloak over me, gave me a hunting knife and a wallet of food, and other things I did not note. Then under her own cloak she hid the lanthorn.

Both narrators experience loyalty, be it on the giving or receiving end. Both of the narrators are men and the both stories are written from male perspectives. Although we have see many simalarites between both narrators it is important to note there are some difference between the characters too. Stevens is an ageing butler who is extremely formaly and regardless of his own feelings for a situation would always make an excuse as to why it wasn't his place to comment.

He was a serious man who treated every aspect of his work as important as the next. He believed in order and decorum and most importantly knew <https://assignbuster.com/the-remains-of-the-day-by-kazuo-ishiguro-and-a-fragment-of-stained-glass-by-d-h-lawrence/>

where his place was when it came to class. With regards to love he was clueless not knowing when some one liked him and when someone did not. The stable boy however was slightly different.

He worshipped and remembered everything his loved one would do for him. He cherished death like his last breath of air. On the other hand he was also a spiteful boy who murdered a horse not belonging to him. He was resentful towards his master who punished him for this crime, which then led to a desperate want for revenge.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading both stories but for different reasons. The Remains of the Day was a sad and humorous love story and a moving and witty meditation on the democratic responsibilities of the ordinary man. It was also the poignant tale of thwarted idealism and the subtlety and grace of the characters has been duly noted. D.

H. Lawrence and his short story A Fragment of Stained Glass was sensuous, passionately intense and probed deep in to uncharted feelings and experiences of human beings. Both stories however would have been unsuccessful if it had not been for the authors excellent choice of narrator.