

We can remember it for you wholesale by philip k. dick

Literature



**ASSIGN
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Literary Analysis Assignment

Based on the book *The Wesleyan Anthology of Science Fiction*

“ We Can Remember it for You Wholesale” by Philip K. Dick

“ Reaching into his coat for his wallet, Quail said, “ Okay. It’s been my lifelong ambition and I can see I’ll never really do it. So I guess I’ll have to settle for this.” “ Don’t think of it that way,” McClane said severely. “ You’re not accepting second-best. The actual memory, with all its vagueness, omissions, and ellipses, not to say distortions - that’s second best.”” (Dick 389).

In the above passage, it mirrors how many people are willing to pay for the price of having something that they really want, as well as the ability of people to settle for second or even third best, as long as they get an item (or a person, for that matter) that is more or less similar to what is wanted originally.

In the story, Douglas Quail is living a boring life of a clerk receiving low wages, which his wife, Kirsten kept nagging him about (Dick 385). Quail fantasizes so much about going on a trip to Mars, which further irritates his wife and prompts her to leave him for good. On the other hand, Quail was terribly bored of his life that he went to a company named Rekal Incorporated that sells memory packets which could distort a person’s own memories in such a way that he or she may be able to recall things that never really happened, with full accuracy (386). Problems arose however, when Quail’s chosen fantasy of going to Mars and being a secret agent was found out to be a total reality, putting him and Rekal’s operators into a brush

with the secret agency that originally hired Quail for an assassination in Mars. Eventually, Rekal was tasked to replace Quail's memories with another fantasy of saving the planet from small aliens by his virtue, only to find out that this memory originally happened way before the Mars encounter (403). The science fiction "We Can Remember it for You Wholesale" by Philip K. Dick presents a haunting idea of memory replacement. It was originally published in 1966 in "The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction", and was received with much success, spawning two movies having the same title of "Total Recall", both of which were loosely-based on the original storyline itself Error: Reference source not found. However, these two movies were much more violent than the original storyline. In a way, the original story shows a bit more compassion between the main protagonist and his adversaries (282).

People are flexible creatures, and could easily adapt to minor changes, even as far as choosing what to remember to suit themselves, as long as the changes are not drastic enough. Another idea is that people are easily swayed by the words of others, as shown by McClane's smooth talk about their products and services. The given passage was able to reflect this, as well as the thoughts and the ideas of some, if not most people who were trying to get what they want, which could eventually change should there be no item available or if only less superior items or persons are within the people's reach, showing the flexibility of choices of many people with regards to what they truly desire.

Works Cited

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