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Literature, Russian Literature



Leon Le P-1 3-5-13 Fahrenheit 451 Major Work Analysis 1. Author. title genre. Ray Bradbury, Novel , Science Fiction 2. Setting: time, place and any important literary or historical context. 1950—1953, Los Angeles, California, 1953 (a shorter version entitled “ The Fireman" was published in 1951 in Galaxy Science Fiction) 3. Major characters Majors: Guy Montag- Protagonist, named after the paper-manufacturing company. Montag quest with him burning books due to its be illegal in the society to him trying to understand books and saving them while the whole society turns on them. He goes through obstacles where he have to leave his wife, burning his supervisor, escaping through a train just to find the meaningful to live. Mildred Montag- Montag’s wife, who seems to have no hope of resolving the conflicts with herself. She tried to commit suicide because of her great obsession with “ The Wall" The television. With the only family she have is the soap opera she watches on the television. She ended up being unaware of herself trying to commit suicide, then later on betrays Montag. Captain Beatty- Beatty is full of contradictions. He is a book burner with a vast knowledge of literature, someone who obviously cared passionately about books at some point. It is important to note that Beatty’s entire speech to Montag describing the history of the firemen is strangely ambivalent, containing tones of irony, sarcasm, passion, and regret, all at once. Beatty calls books treacherous weapons, yet he uses his own book learning to manipulate Montag mercilessly. Faber- Faber who lives in the shaqs hiding from society because he read books. manipulate Montag via his two-way radio to accomplish the things his cowardice has prevented him from doing himself, acting as the brain directing Montag’s body. He guides Montag

through the struggles and his quest that he has until later on, the firemen found Faber and killed him. 4. Plot Summary: Guy Montag is a fireman who burns books in a futuristic American city. In Montag's world, firemen start fires rather than putting them out. The people in this society do not read books, enjoy nature, spend time by themselves, think independently, or have meaningful conversations. Instead, they drive very fast, watch excessive amounts of television on wall-size sets, and listen to the radio on "Seashell Radio" sets attached to their ears. Montag encounters a gentle seventeen-year-old girl named Clarisse McClellan, who opens his eyes to the emptiness of his life with her innocently penetrating questions and her unusual love of people and nature. Over the next few days, Montag experiences a series of disturbing events. First, his wife, Mildred, attempts suicide by swallowing a bottle of sleeping pills. Then, when he responds to an alarm that an old woman has a stash of hidden literature, the woman shocks him by choosing to be burned alive along with her books. A few days later, he hears that Clarisse has been killed by a speeding car. Montag's dissatisfaction with his life increases, and he begins to search for a solution in a stash of books that he has stolen from his own fires and hidden inside an air-conditioning vent. When Montag fails to show up for work, his fire chief, Beatty, pays a visit to his house. Beatty explains that it's normal for a fireman to go through a phase of wondering what books have to offer, and he delivers a dizzying monologue explaining how books came to be banned in the first place. According to Beatty, special-interest groups and other "minorities" objected to books that offended them. Soon, books all began to look the same, as writers tried to avoid offending anybody. This was not enough, however, and

society as a whole decided to simply burn books rather than permit conflicting opinions. Beatty tells Montag to take twenty-four hours or so to see if his stolen books contain anything worthwhile and then turn them in for incineration. Montag begins a long and frenzied night of reading.

Overwhelmed by the task of reading, Montag looks to his wife for help and support, but she prefers television to her husband's company and cannot understand why he would want to take the terrible risk of reading books. He remembers that he once met a retired English professor named Faber sitting in a park, and he decides that this man might be able to help him understand what he reads. He visits Faber, who tells him that the value of books lies in the detailed awareness of life that they contain. Faber says that Montag needs not only books but also the leisure to read them and the freedom to act upon their ideas. Faber agrees to help Montag with his reading, and they concoct a risky scheme to overthrow the status quo. Faber will contact a printer and begin reproducing books, and Montag will plant books in the homes of firemen to discredit the profession and to destroy the machinery of censorship. Faber gives him a two-way radio earpiece (the "green bullet") so that he can hear what Montag hears and talk to him secretly. Montag goes home, and soon two of his wife's friends arrive to watch television. The women discuss their families and the war that is about to be declared in an extremely frivolous manner. Their superficiality angers him, and he takes out a book of poetry and reads "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold. Faber buzzes in his ear for him to be quiet, and Mildred tries to explain that the poetry reading is a standard way for firemen to demonstrate the uselessness of literature. The women are extremely

disturbed by the poem and leave to file a complaint against Montag. Montag goes to the fire station and hands over one of his books to Beatty. Beatty confuses Montag by barraging him with contradictory quotations from great books. Beatty exploits these contradictions to show that literature is morbid and dangerously complex, and that it deserves incineration. Suddenly, the alarm sounds, and they rush off to answer the call, only to find that the alarm is at Montag's own house. Mildred gets into a cab with her suitcase, and Montag realizes that his own wife has betrayed him. Beatty forces Montag to burn the house himself; when he is done, Beatty places him under arrest. When Beatty continues to berate Montag, Montag turns the flamethrower on his superior and proceeds to burn him to ashes. Montag knocks the other firemen unconscious and runs. The Mechanical Hound, a monstrous machine that Beatty has set to attack Montag, pounces and injects Montag's leg with a large dose of anesthetic. Montag manages to destroy it with his flamethrower; then he walks off the numbness in his leg and escapes with some books that were hidden in his backyard. He hides these in another fireman's house and calls in an alarm from a pay phone. Montag goes to Faber's house, where he learns that a new Hound has been put on his trail, along with several helicopters and a television crew. Faber tells Montag that he is leaving for St. Louis to see a retired printer who may be able to help them. Montag gives Faber some money and tells him how to remove Montag's scent from his house so the Hound will not enter it. Montag then takes some of Faber's old clothes and runs off toward the river. The whole city watches as the chase unfolds on TV, but Montag manages to escape in the river and change into Faber's clothes to disguise his scent. He

drifts downstream into the country and follows a set of abandoned railroad tracks until he finds a group of renegade intellectuals ("the Book People"), led by a man named Granger, who welcome him. They are a part of a nationwide network of book lovers who have memorized many great works of literature and philosophy. They hope that they may be of some help to mankind in the aftermath of the war that has just been declared. Montag's role is to memorize the Book of Ecclesiastes. Enemy jets appear in the sky and completely obliterate the city with bombs. Montag and his new friends move on to search for survivors and rebuild civilization.

5. Symbols: The Sieve and the Sand- The symbols shows Montag memory and how he grasp memory. Such as of his childhood, memories he is able to remember easily, but trying to learn something, he's easily forgets like sand pass through a sieve. Mirrors — The mirror shows how seeing oneself clearly rather being deceived by society itself.

6. Important metaphors- a. "This book has pores." Macbeth compares life to an ineffectual actor. This metaphor is important because Faber explains the importance of books. How it contains knowledge but "trying to fill your mind by reading books is like trying to fill a leaking bucket" b. "The sun burnt every day. It burnt Time . . . Time was busy burning the years and the people anyway, without any help from him. So if he burnt things with the firemen and the sun burnt Time, that meant that everything burnt!," The sun burnt every day. It burnt Time . . . Time was busy burning the years and the people anyway, without any help from him. So if he burnt things with the firemen and the sun burnt Time, that meant that everything burnt! c. "So it was the hand that started it all . . . His hands had been infected, and soon it would be his arms . . . His hands were

ravenous Montag guiltily portrays his actions as an involuntary bodily reflex

7. Narrative Point of View - While the narrative is third person, it's limited to Guy Montag. We spend a good amount of time in his brain hearing his thoughts, learning who he is, and understanding his many, many personal crises. This keeps us on his side and allows us insights into the world of Fahrenheit 451 we would otherwise have been denied.

8. Theme- Censorship- Throughout the whole novel, it can be shown as censorship. Not as nudity or cussing on t. v. but the blockage of reality. In the novel, the society is controlled. Restricted from books and a step towards to burning them. Where books provides knowledge and free will, but firemen shuns them from society from learning.

9. Significant quotes (5) 1) " So it was the hand that started it all" THE HEATH AND THE SALAMANDER Montag guiltily portrays his actions as an involuntary bodily reflex 2) " We must all be alike. Not everyone born free and equal, as the constitution says, but everyone made equal . . . A book is a loaded gun in the house next door. Burn it. Take the shot from the weapon. Breach man's mind. " THE HEATH AND THE SALAMANDER Captain Beatty defends " equalization" but the irony is everyone isn't equal 3) " Do you know why books such as this are so important? Because they have quality. And what does the word quality mean? To me it means texture. This book has pores. " THE SIEVE AND SAND Faber explains the importance of books. How it contains knowledge but " trying to fill your mind by reading books is like trying to fill a leaking bucket" 4) " It's perpetual motion; the thing man wanted to invent but never did...". THE SIEVE AND SAND Beatty speaks these lines to Montag outside Montag's home in " Burning Bright, " right before Montag burns him to death with the

flamethrower. He muses about the mystical nature of fire, its unexplained beauty, and the fascination it holds for people. 5) " The sun burnt every day. It burnt Time . ." BURNING BRIGHT Montag muses on the sun as he escapes the city and floats down the river in " Burning Bright. " Montag sees the stars for the first time in years, and he finally enjoys the leisure to think that Faber told him he would need in order to regain his life.