

Flames and dangling wire – robert gray essay



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One thing that Robert Gray has mastered is leaving no detail big or small out. *Flames and Dangling Wires* is a poem that effectively conveys the effects of the human's materialistic demands on the world. Robert Gray shows what life will inevitably be if our actions and attitudes do not change through the somewhat disturbing images that he renders. The idea of a fog like shield is used to show that the increase production of waste is hiding us from the true reality of our actions. The smoke is seen to be unceasing and never ending which is in contrast to the world which is unsustainable and fragile.

Gray tries to show the human attitude which is also portrayed through the mouse clicking on the ignore button which depicts that we choose to ignore the consequences. The smoke in the line " Now the distant buildings are stencilled in the smoke" acts as a barrier between us and the harsh actuality of our world. The technique of stencilling and only seeing the rough outline is symbolic of our impassiveness to the fine implications of our actions, just concerned about the immediate gains for ourselves. Read about Robert Frost. Not seeing the full picture is represented in the image of a book with words carved out of it. One of the other main ideas that Robert Gray discusses is the accumulation of unrenewable waste that is damaging our natural world. He illustrates this uncomfortable tone through " the tons of rotten newspaper and great cods of cloth " The image resembles a scene of undigested food which is unsettling and created a sense of urgency within us to change as it is directly relatable to us.

The amount of wasted material is seen in the line " a landscape of tin cans". Landscape is linked to natural scenes as tin cans are man-made therefore

irony is created. This line shows the vastness and the staggering amounts of the tin cans produced by metaphorically calling it a landscape. The image of the man cutting out a slice of the tree emphasises that we create masses of waste just to get the things that we need and we just use the resources without thought.

Our self-centred approach to production is set for failure which is depicted in the image of a road that leads to a wall. It shows that even though we know the path of this road, we continue to take it unmoved by the fact that it does not go anywhere. Gray also explores the idea of change in *Flames and Dangling Wires*.