

A vine on the house

Life



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A Vine on the House Ambrose Bierce Ambrose Bierce has a special talent of keeping readers alert on their toes and holding their breaths till the very last word. I believe Mr. Bierce wanted to allow others to understand that circumstances and events are not always what they appear to be. The words Mr. Harding expressed and the reality of the situation were two complete opposites. He kept a secret of his wife's "disappearance" and also picked up everything and left, leaving no signs behind, leading to believe he was very secretive and suspicious.

Secrets are kept in every household, things that could kill if it was leaked. I feel like the writer's purpose was to keep the reader guessing and inferring. This story could also be an account of his life and a cry for help. Mr. Bierce grew up in a troubled family. His two sons died early on and he found out about his wife's infidelity. This could be his way of plotting revenge on his wife. It is a cry for help because he mentions Mr. Harding disappearing, which is exactly what Bierce did a few years later.

The intended audience is for those who enjoy getting goose bumps, those who seek a thrill and love being kept in the dark. It is not however for the uneasy sleeper. The main theme of this story and connection on a universal level is that in every family, there is a fair share of secrets. Everyone can relate to this one way or another because we all have issues we wished no one would find out. The Harding family as a whole must've had a few problems of their own. A family doesn't just all of a sudden fall apart. It takes time to disintegrate.

In the story, like in real life, it shows that there are unhappy couples out there, ones who have stopped loving each other and instead find pleasure in

hurting their significant other. The Harding family is just one example of a relationship that is unhealthy, both physically and emotionally. The author has quite a few tricks up his sleeves to grasp the reader's attention. First of all, Mr. Bierce is an expert in the suspense category. He keeps readers guessing and wondering what will happen next. For example, Mr.

Harding mentions his wife went to "visit relatives" but his tone of voice allowed no further questioning. This makes me curious because he seems like he's hiding a dark secret. He also later on flees the country, which gathers even more curiosity. Mr. Bierce describes the "haunted house" as not actually haunted, making me wonder what truly happened for it to deserve such a title. He also pulls in elements from his life. This story is loosely based on his own family matters. He could also be a "revenge" for finding out about his wife's sinful actions.

A Vine on the House has supernatural aspects but because the events were pulled from his life, it makes the story seem more realistic and feel like it could potentially be a true story. Another aspect that I enjoyed was that, yes this story is gothic, but the gothic elements were all very subtle and mind boggling but not gory. There was no mentions of diseases, a small brush on incense and only one inferred death. This gives the story a different twist to the normal classical gothic tales. The author uses foreshadowing well. He describes Mrs.

Harding in detail and left her disappearance very shocking and sudden leading to her inferred murder by her husband. He also described the vine along the house as a sign of the supernatural that was partly concealed, which indicated before hand that something out of the ordinary was going to

happen. These are all red flags, leading to the discovery of the vine's unnatural root formation. I enjoyed this short story very much. It was intriguing and kept me on my toes at all times. I enjoyed the suspense and the feeling of wanting to know what happens next.

The one part that I was disappointed in was that I found the part where people were witnessing the phenomenon of the tree dragged on for a long time. My interest was lost during that time. However, I really enjoyed the idea that things are never what they appear to be and words spoken could just be a slur of lies. I find that this is completely true in today's society. People don't always show their true colours. The part I love was the cliff-hanger ending. It makes me wonder, could this all be a coincidence or could it truly happen in real life? If it could, then it was surely explain the phenomenon of a shaking leaf on a still tree.