

Short response # 5



03 November 2007 The Virgin Suicides The boys were amazed to hear the girls' stories and gossip about the neighbors. " As the houses passed, they had something to say about the families in each one, which meant, they had been looking out at us as intensely as we had been looking in." (123)

Therefore, the boys discovered for the first time since the death of the first sister that the girls were quite normal. In fact they found the sisters to be just as regular as the boys themselves. In referring to the girls, the boys used the words, " Like us..." hence, the boys' perspective of the Lisbon sisters changed in that, they saw the girls as they saw themselves - youths in the process of development with like beliefs, values and behaviors. (124)

Secondly, the boys realized that their categorization of the Lisbon sisters was completely inaccurate. " Who had known they talk so much, held so many opinions..."(124) The boys amended their thinking of them as scared, socially inept, lifeless creatures to confident, socially adept, beautiful and energetic girls. The boys with a note of wonderment announced, "...the girls they had been continuously living, developing in ways we couldn't imagine, reading every book..." This new information not only increased the boys' infatuation with the girls but also ignited a higher level of respect for the girls whom they had once only known in their imagination. (124)

Further, the boys seemed to notice a difference in the behavior and personality of each girl. Whereas they once thought of them only as an identical unit, they now saw them as individuals. At the dance, the boys' perspective of the sisters seemed to interchange between identical unit and individual girls. " The Lisbon girls looked identical again..." (132) suggesting that at one point in the dance they had begun to see them as individuals but by the end of the date, they were " a pack" again, moving together with the

sole purpose of finding the missing sister.(132) The boys saw them as inseparable. Bonnie's reluctance to leave Lux alone even for second, confirmed this new information in their minds. Certainly this view of the girls as an entity was accurate for the girls all died and was buried as a unit. In addition, the Lisbon home appeared to be a place of isolation, rejection and sadness, a place of abnormalities. As the girls moved away from the house they were able to show abandonment of the misguided feelings of abnormality and begin to show their true selves, that is, their ability to enjoy life in spite of struggles. The boys noted, " Up close the girls didn't look depressed." Apparently the boys expected the girls to be in continuous mourning for their dead sister.

Importantly, on the night of the dance, the boys discovered that the girls were ready and willing to live. The girls had been reading books, learning about etiquette and everything this world had to offer, in short, the girls had been living. How did the information gained on the night of the dance change the boys' perspective of the girls? The boys gained a greater level of respect and adoration for the girls. They saw them as highly intelligent and sociable individuals who had a part to play in their world. (124)

Works Cited

Eugenides, Jeffrey. *The Virgin Suicides*. New York: Warner Books, Incorporated. 1993.