

Hills like white
elephants – ernest
hemingway analytical
essay



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People often face situations that require them to make tough decisions and they have to live by them for the rest of their lives. In the story Hills Like White Elephants, Ernest Hemingway writes about a couple that is in a dilemma about an unborn child and they have to decide on the best decision to take regarding the pregnancy.

Jig and his companion the American are in Spain at a rail station taking drinks while awaiting a train. The American tells Jig to abort the fetus because the procedure is simple. He does not entertain the thought of becoming a parent. After, the deliberation on the issue, Jig decides to carry out the procedure.

Jig and the American man is an unmarried couple who have consummated their relationship and as a result, Jig is pregnant. Her boyfriend the American tells her to get rid of the pregnancy even though the author does not use the word abortion we can deduce its meaning from the conversation, " It's just to let the air in" (Hemingway 1). The man tells Jig, " It's really an awfully simple operation. It is not an operational at all" (Hemingway 1).

The American wants the fetus aborted because he does not want it to interrupt his adventurous lifestyle. He is a man who likes to travel from one place to another, their travel bags had labels from the various hotels they had checked into during their travels (Hemingway 1). On the other hand, Jig wants to have the baby as she hints in the conversation. She seems to be tired of the adventure and wants to settle down.

The American man manages to manipulate Jig psychologically by telling her not to abort if she does not want to because he senses her hesitance, " I
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think it's the best thing to do. But I don't want you to do it if you don't really want to" (Hemingway 1). He tells her that after she aborts they can have everything they want in the world.

However, she does not agree with him and tells him that, " No, we can't" (Hemingway 1). She is aware that once she loses her child she can never have it back, " And once they take it away, you never get it back" (Hemingway 1). In spite of that knowledge, she seems like she is willing to go through with the procedure not to lose her American. Jig seems afraid of losing the American man " And if I do it you'll be happy and things will be like they were and you'll love me" (Hemingway 1)?

The question shows that she is not ready to lose him and says, " Then I'll do it. Because I don't care about me" (Hemingway 1). The only thing she cares about is being with him and his love. She also wants to make him happy and reduce his worry because he says the only thing making them unhappy is that baby. Therefore getting rid of the baby will remove the hurdle to their happiness.

She also decides to abort because maybe she knows that marrying a man who is not willing to settle down would only mean a difficult marriage. The American hints that he is ready to settle if she decides to keep the baby, " You've got to realize ...that I don't want you to do it if you don't want to. I'm

perfectly willing to go through with it if it means anything to you" (Hemingway 1).

This does not reassure her because the American keeps bullying her into procuring an abortion by drumming in the message that the procedure “ is perfectly simple” (Hemingway 1). Thus, she chooses to have the abortion as it seems as the only way out of her current predicament. They do not discuss other options of dealing with the pregnancy such as giving up the baby for adoption and hence she might have decided to abort.

Finally, I think Jig should not abort simply because I believe that abortion is morally wrong. She does not seem to have her own voice. She is controlled by the American because she is willing to go along with his suggestions even if she does not agree with them.

She should keep the baby because she hints that she knows of people who have gone through the procedure and they are not happy. If she goes through with the procedure, she will live with regrets for the rest of her life because she will never be able to bring back her dead child to life again as most of the women who have gone through the procedure attest.

Even if, keeping and raising the child will be a burden she should be willing to bear the consequences of her actions instead of trying to look for an easier way out. She should be firm and tell the American that she will keep the baby and that it is time they stopped their adventurous lifestyle. On the contrary, if she goes through with the abortion she should take precaution not to become pregnant again by using contraceptives because she will find herself in the same predicament yet again.

Hemingway, Ernest . Hills Like White Elephants. gummyprint. com. n. d. Web.