

How does willis hall create dramatic tension and excitement essay sample

[Literature](#), [Fiction](#)



How does Willis Hall create dramatic tension and excitement in the two sections involving the capture and killing of the Japanese soldier?

Willis Hall uses very effective techniques in creating dramatic tension and excitement in the two sections. The ones that are involved the most are stage directions and emotions of characters. These make the two sections exciting and dramatic. The excitement in the sections means the way the play makes us excited about some bits of the play and by dramatic tension is when the suspense levels get high and make us want to know more. The whole subject of the play is about tension and drama as it is set in the army and the reality of war is very dramatic and full of tension so Willis Hall might have used this to create an exciting and dramatic play.

The two sections occur in different parts of the play. Section one which involves the capturing of the Japanese soldier is two thirds of the way through act one of the play. This section starts off with Mitchem giving a long speech and the first sighting of the Japanese soldier. Also the soldier enters the hut and decisions are made. The second section of the play is near the end of act two. In this section the Japanese soldier is killed and the group start to argue. It is a very dramatic section.

The first section has a series of different events with different emotions. One of the events that occur is the group hearing a Japanese voice on the set. In this section Whitaker is trying to send a message to the base camp but receives a reply from the Japanese army. The emotions are mixed as some of the soldiers find it amusing. Bamforth is one of them as he says “ you’ve got it, whitto son, all right. You’ve got the ruddy japs” showing a sign of humour

as he is not really scared that the Japanese have answered instead of the British. On the other hand Whittaker is really shocked and scared.

We quote from the stage directions “ Whittaker, who is staring in horror at the set” this shows that he knows or is thinking something is wrong. There is some worry and confusion in Mitchem's language when McLeish asks about his brother who is working at the base and Mitchem keeps on repeating “ shut up” this is what someone says when they are angry or trying to think in this case I think it's because he is trying to think. This creates dramatic tension as the situation seems to be getting serious and emotions start running high.

Dramatic tension occurs when Mitchem decides to put things in control by giving a long speech to the group. He starts off giving short and sharp commands saying “ now shut up. Listen” this way he will have their attention and he can tell them what he wants as they will be listening. He also reminds them that they are young and how inexperienced they are. We say this because Mitchem says “ Fred Karno's mob”, “ crumbs”, “ Joiskins” all these indicate that Mitchem is being disrespectful and says what they really are. This creates tension as we do not know how the soldiers will respond to what Mitchem says.

Also Mitchem could be trying to toughen them up a bit, making them prove him wrong. Also the speech could have been used to restore confidence as Willis Hall says in the stage directions “ one or two are even amused” which shows us they are not as scared and sad as before. Mitchem does this as he knows the seriousness of the situation and needs his men to be as relaxed as

possible as panicking soldiers do not do as well as they can. Willis Hall has this speech to temporarily release tension so that it can build up again. This makes it more exciting for us as it builds up quite fast.

Tension is built up again shortly after Mitchem's long speech as the first sighting of the Japanese soldier occurs. Bamforth sees the Japanese soldier from his post. He says to Mitchem "I thought I saw a movement down the track" his language shows he is unsure if he actually saw anything. Mitchem then looks to where Bamforth was looking and asks Bamforth "are you sure, Bamforth?" and he replies

"Meaning what". These two sentences show Mitchem does not trust Bamforth completely and thinks he is lying. This is the start off when things start getting exciting for us as we don't know what Bamforth saw and makes us curious. Then shortly after they spot the Japanese soldier coming towards the hut, the group all hid so they do not get spotted. The pace of which the Japanese enters the hut is very slow this creates dramatic tension as we are unsure what will happen next. This puts the soldiers in a tense way as they are unsure if he is going to come into the hut. When the Japanese soldier comes into the hut Johnston grabs him quickly we quote from the stage directions "lunges forward and grabs the Japanese" lunges shows us it was done quickly.

Johnston then tells someone to kill him but all refuse apart from Bamforth who is told to stop by Mitchem as he wants him alive. The excitement is built as we think something dramatic was going to occur but did not happen. This

also creates dramatic tension as we are suspense to what will happen next. There is then a release of tension and some humour occurs as Mitchem is trying to see if Japanese soldier understands English. Mitchem says “ you speakee English? Understand? “ The way he talks is amusing for us but a serious situation for the soldiers. Willis Hall creates excitement for us as he releases tension for a while but builds up again in a short while after.

The second section involves the killing of the Japanese soldier and the ending of the play. The song Bamforth sings in section two is a bit ironic as he says “ A handsome young private lay dying, at the edge of the jungle he lay.” This is ironic as near the end of the play one the soldier dies in the jungle so it sounds the same. At this stage the tension and excitement is on a low level and not much happens. This helps create excitement later in the play. Bamforth first finds out that they are going to kill the Japanese after he offers the water to him. He says “ you got to take him back as well” showing he knows that they are going to kill the Japanese.

At this stage Willis Hall starts building both dramatic tension and excitement. Bamforth starts to protect the Japanese soldier” you’re not doing it, Johnston” this tells us that Bamforth does not want the Japanese to die. We can relate this to what Bamforth says earlier in the play when he talks about how he is not a hero and does not really care about others. But now he is being a hero as he is protecting someone from being killed. Mitchem gives an order to Bamforth telling him to move out of his way as he wants to kill the Japanese soldier but Bamforth refuses it saying “ stick it” which is a strong word to say to someone in a higher rank.

He then tries persuading some of the other soldiers to join him and protect the Japanese soldier. He starts off from the weakest member of the group, being Whitaker, and goes to the strongest. We think he does this because he might get more people to help him get the stronger members on his side. Whitaker refuses so he moves on to Evans who also refuses. He carries on doing this and does not get any soldiers to back him up. We think Willis Hall has this bit of the play as it creates dramatic tension as we do not know if any of the soldiers will help him out. Whitaker is then told to kill the Japanese soldier. We can tell he is scared as it says in the stage directions “and is trembling with fear” which shows Whitaker does not want to kill the Japanese himself.

Mitchem then gets tired of Bamforth talking so he slaps him to make him quiet. After this excitement is built up as the soldiers are in a hurry to get out of the hut and get away as possible from the Japanese soldiers. Mitchem knows that the chances of them getting back are slim. We support that as Mitchem says “we haven’t got a snowball’s chance in hell of getting back” he knows they won’t get back and this adds to the dramatic tension as we are wondering if they will or will not get back. In the end all soldiers die apart from Johnston who has a wound in his arm. We know he isn’t going to die as it says “waves the white flag” showing he calls peace to the Japanese soldiers shooting at him. All this is dramatic as a lot goes on in the last section.

The main method that Willis Hall uses includes stage directions, character emotions and how they behave, way the play is set and the whole story line.

All these add up to a very dramatic and exciting play. I think Willis Hall is very effective in creating dramatic tension and excitement as he uses the main story line and the techniques together to make us want to know what happens after.