

# Heating the world

[Food & Diet](#)



Introduction: The community considered Tucker very fortunate for his marriage, and so did Tucker, nevertheless he had no knowledge of modern women and the marriage had brought changes he had not predicted. This is a statement made early in the short story “ Heating the world” written by Owen Marshall. This story is set in a rural Northern area of the South Island. The story is a fiction piece classified under social genre, it is also written in third person, so it is narrated from an on-lookers perspective rather than a personal perspective.

This lets the reader develop their own thoughts on the characters and view the ideas in which the writer may be trying to convey. An idea that is developed throughout the short story is that marriage can bring unpredictable change to a typical rural bachelor. This idea is portrayed through Tucker’s conversations about his new wife to “ Neville O’Doone his counsel in such things”. Tucker’s views on life and finance, what he thinks are justifiable purchases and why are also ways of showing the idea before and after marriage.

The idea is also conveyed through Tucker’s views on the introduction of new food, fashion and modern life’s necessities. At the beginning of the short story we get an idea of where Tucker is in his life. Tucker recently married at forty two after having been one of the last bachelors in his district to marry shortly after his mother had passed away. Before marriage Tucker had done for himself and lived in “ traditional rural simplicity rather than poverty”. His financial priorities were focused on things for the farm which were “ natural expenses of life”.

So it made his life very unsettled becoming newly married when his wife started to spend money. Tucker found her purchases unjustifiable. Quote: “ to buy a new lampshade or replace the kitchen lino for reason of colour co-ordination would no more enter his head than to dine at the Victor Hugo restaurant in town when he had food in his own home. A four and half thousand dollar skeet gun on the other hand, or an irrigation mule at twenty thousand, were perfectly justifiable purchases. ” This quote shows that marriage has brought up issues that Tucker wouldn't have changed himself previously because they weren't initially important.

It also shows that Tucker was cautious with his money before marriage even though initially he didn't have to be (Farm worth about half a million on a bad day). Another statement made in the text about Tucker was that “ At the tables of his married friends he developed a taste for lasagne and apple strudel” The reader can see that his traditional life has changed and that perhaps he always expected to have home cooked meals once married. Therefore showing unpredictable change when Tuckers wife starts to buy new things for the house and is starting to introduce Tucker to the finer things in life, such as dining out.

During the story we view the dialogue between Tucker and Neville during which Tucker first seeks advice from his friend. Tucker approaches the conversation by addressing Neville's wife and asking if she likes soap. This is where Tucker starts to voice his concerns about how many “ soaps” there are in the bathroom. “ I counted seven along the bath last night, and all partly used. ” The thought that there are so many different types of products available has Tucker in a state of confusion, it also has Neville come to the

conclusion of why it may confuse Tucker who had only one bar of yellow soap in his bathroom before marriage.

The reader will begin to see that this new lifestyle is becoming hard for Tucker to make sense of after so many years of living his simple bachelor lifestyle. Tucker also states that “ We’ve put in a shower as well. ” This shows the development of the idea because the text shows the reaction of Tucker to new changes. This shows that Tucker could not predict such changes and was surprised and slightly unprepared for such change to happen after he was married. Again throughout the whole short story we see Tucker’s reactions to being introduced to modern life’s new necessities such as food, clothing and renovation.

The first reaction was to all the types of soaps in the bathroom and a need for a shower. Explained in the previous paragraph. Tucker’s introduction to new fruits was stated when he again was expressing his concern to his friend Neville. Tucker couldn’t believe that you buy fruit because all his life he had grown it in their own orchard, “ now the whole crop lies beneath the trees in the orchard for the wasps and the birds”. He also exclaimed the fact that they quite often had fruit in the bowl, “ but the thing is, see, that it often goes off before its eaten and has to be thrown out”.

The whole concept of produce being purchased and wasted was poisonous to Tucker. Along with the fact that his wife kept buying him new clothes and that his new daughters had a pants draw each was incredible! (Considering he now has 3 daughters). Tucker was accustomed to having as stated “ three pairs of underpants-one to wear, one to wash and one to change into. ” This

shows the simple life he previously had and the unpredicted change which now seemed to bother him once he had become married.