

# An analysis of fly away peter by david malouf



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

" Fly Away Peter" by David Mallow explores a series of abstract concepts through the use of point of view, structure and characterization. Jim Saddler is a self-contained man with a profound view on the world. His innocence provokes sympathy towards him from the reader, however also captures the attention of Imagine Harcourt and Ashley Crotchet. The three share a close bond, tied by their love of birds; Ashley attempts to understand them as Jim names the birds, recording them in The Book, and Imagine tries to preserve the birds through her camera lens.

Jims innocence allows him to see the world in an abstract way; and as he loses his innocence, he loses the connection he has with that side of himself, becoming closer with " the dark side of his head". Mallow has used Jim and his relationships to identify concepts such as preservation, the notion of two worlds and mapping. The notion of preservation is a concept explored by Mallow through the characterization of Jim, and those around him. Ashley finds Jim in his swampland one day, and, rather than persecuting him, Ashley realizes Jims love of birds, and offers him a permanent Job, caring for the sanctuary.

It is in Jims words that Ashley finds his interest for the birds, he wants to know them, as if the nameless creatures haven't any being. This is seen in Chapter 6, when Jim first mentions 'The Book, in which he records the names of birds. However, Jim makes sure to explain that, " This sort of writing was serious. It was giving the creature, through its name, a permanent place in the world, as Miss Harcourt did through pictures. " (page 45) Jim treats 'The Book as if it is a sanctuary in and of itself. The naming of these birds makes them preserved for not only Jim, but also Ashley.

It is also clear in these sentences that Jim looks up to Imagine, as he was without a mother figure. It is perhaps because of this that Jim is an innocent soul, lost without the guiding hand of a mother. In this case, Jim's innocence has caused him to hold on to what he knows, to preserve it, to view 'The Book' as a sanctuary for the birds he has seen. His innocence allows him to keep the world around him in perfect condition, inside an everlasting, man-made object. This concept is further explored when Jim meets Glance. Much like Jim has 'The Book', Glance owns a 'List'.

Jim explains that the list held "... Dresses as well as names, which he flashed but never let you read. " It is clear that Glance's 'List' is of the girls he has been with, and is as much a symbol of Glance's immaturity as it is of Jim's loss of innocence. It could be argued that Jim's sexual promiscuity is what endangers his innocence, starting with Connie, an encounter after which he begins to ponder over actually going to the warrant, and now with Glance, as Glance's own sexual encounters begin to wear away at the gradually decreasing innocence held by Jim.

Mallow has been clever in the characterization of Glance, building him up to be the opposite of Jim, however they are very alike; both preserve what they are interested in, as if to keep the old world alive. Through the characterization of Jim and Glance, Mallow has shown the notion of preservation, through naming the birds, with Jim and Ashley, through photographing the birds, with Imagine, and through women, with Glance. The concept of mapping is explained through the birds, through Jim's point of view.

Though an abstract concept, Jim's innocence allows him to think of maps as those in your head, the one in his Drought to Tie when he loses Nils Innocence to ten sky, taking TOT In Berets nilpotent, ND furthermore on the battlefield. The maps in the heads of the birds astound Jim, as their tiny minds remember the landmarks of thousands of places. The map in his own head is continuously grown throughout the novel, as he attempts to understand the maps of the birds. Once up in the crate' with Bert, Jim remarks that "... Hat came to him most clearly was how the map in his own head, which he had tested and found accurate, might be related to the one the birds carried in theirs..." From Jim's point of view, we understand the abstract concept of mapping, perhaps a metaphor for the migrating of birds.

Page 122 " he was out of himself and floating, seeing the scene from high up... Remote and silent. Perhaps he had, in some part of himself, taken on the nature of a bird; thought it was with a human eye that he saw, and his body, still entirely his own... \* With a human eye' he is more innocent, not as subjected to the thoughts of abstract, such as an out of body experience, he still feels himself, just from a different vantage point \* At the end of chapter 16, page 124, ". How the map he carried there had so immensely expanded" gain in knowledge of the land, loss of innocence, mapping \* Two worlds Rats and birds \* Rats - underworld, earth \* Birds - heaven, sky \* Page 84 the guns, Jim felt, he would get used to; and the snipers bullets... UT the rats were another species. And for him they were familiars of death, creatures of the underworld, as birds were of life and the air. To come to terms with the rats and his deep disgust for them, he would have to turn his whole world upside down" Conclusion \* Through his language and characterization, Mallow has

shown Jims innocence to create an abstract view on the world. \* Becomes more normal. \* Returns to innocent at his death, comes home and stuff.