

Review of origin of brunists

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Whenever something tragic happens, human beings look for a shelter to take since this is the way of taking away the pain. In addition to this pain, if their lives are dull and bitter, they will feel the need for something brightening to refresh their lives just like it happens in the novel, *Origin of the Brunists* by Robert Coover. In this novel, a coal mine disaster occurs in which ninentyseven miners pass away and only one miner called Giovanni Bruno succeeds to survive. After his being rescued, he uses phrases such as Mount of Redemption and claims that he had seen Virgin Mary while he had been trapped in the mine.

Because of his visions, he becomes a leader of a religious cult named as Brunists and he is viewed as a prophet by some townpeople. As their lives are dull and bitter, they are in need of something to illuminate lives, which is the religious cult named as Brunists. In this novel, the origins of this religious cult and how its popularity are increased take place. The novel begins with Brunists' pilgrimage to Mount of Redemption and their preparation for the End of the World on the weekend of April. What they expect of End of the World is not obvious but might be The Final Judgement .

For the preparation to pilgrimage, members of the cult are to wear tunics and “ only white garments under the tunics” (Coover 15) of theirs. In the first chapter, events and impressions described are witnessed by the characters, Hiram and Emma Clegg, and there is indefiniteness about some events such as Marcella Bruno's death. Since by miracle, Giovanni Bruno is sole survivor of the mine disaster and has visions of Virgin Mary, he is chosen for cultleadershipby the townspeople who need new religious experiences.

After Giovanni overcomes poisoning, his phrases such as Mount of Redemption are heard by townpeople. Besides this, there is a rumour among people that a white bird is seen in the mine before the catastrophe. Because of all these, Mrs Eleanor Norton who is a high schoolteacher asks Giovanni whether “ he is the One who is to come” and he acknowledges this.

According to his sister, Marcella Bruno, Giovanni may have been possessed by a divine spirit while trapped in the mine. Therefore, he is chosen as a leader of Brunists cult.

One of the characters who needs something illuminating in her life and has an influence over creation of the cult, Brunists is Eleanor Norton who is a high-school teacher. She has been fired from several workplaces and also loses her job at West Condon High School since she cannot give up inducing some of her students consisting of mostly boys to join in religious activities. Therefore, she and her husband, Wylie are compelled to leave many towns that they live in as people in the towns do not approve her interference with young male students.

It can be said that Eleanor Nortons’ spiritual longings take important place in the formation of the cult. After Giovanni’s acknowledging that he is “ the one to come” , the cult starts to form around him. Eleanor practices automatic writing in which she communicates with a spirit, Domiron who gives her secret messages and prophecies. Therefore, she is a dominant member of the group. Since the daily lives of the miners and the merchants in the town are tedious and hard, they believe in anything that offers to make their lives special.

As their lives depend on chatting with each other, watching basketball games, submitting to the mine for economic survival, it is not surprising that Brunist movement which offers specialness will have followers. Owing to media, Brunists cult gains popularity and its popularity becomes nationwide. This movement in West Condon attract media's attention since it is little wonder that any movement waiting for the end of the world is covered by national newspapers and televisions.

The person who first reveals actions of Brunists and sells these to national newspapers is the local journalist, Tiger Miller, who is the owner of town newspaper. In order to get the story of Brunists, he joins in the cult without believing it. While succeeding learning the story of them, he also falls in love with Marcella Bruno. Therefore, he tries to rescue her from the cult but cannot be successful since she is killed by a car while awaiting the end of the world with the group. Miller publishes so many things about Brunists that people in the town are split into its supporters and nonsupporters.

Many West Condoners are embraced by the actions of Brunists when they read the news about them on the newspapers. As a result, a group of people forms a group named Common Sense Committee trying to put an end to this cult. As a consequence, Origin of the Brunists by Robert Coover generally tells the story of a religious cult which is formed after Giovanni Bruno, only survivor of the mine disaster, achieves keep alive. Bruno's visions, a white bird seen in the mine before the catastrophe, dull and hard lives of the townspeople who need something new in their lives are led them to form a religious group. This novel shows how people believe in something which a person makes up. Without questioning, they even consider someone as a

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prophet and wait for the end of the world though they do not know when the world ends. When they gather on the Mount of Redemption, they even beat and kick the journalist, Tiger Miller since their story becomes even international because of him. At the end of novel, the end of the world does not come and they cannot accomplish killing Tiger Miller.