

# The perceptions of what constitutes masculinity essay sample



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Australian voices The text “The story of Tom Brenna” by J. C. Burke deals with many of the issues facing today’s youth such as perceptions of what constitutes masculinity , the transition between childhood and adolescence, and the influences of peer-pressure and alcohol . It tells the story of the central protagonist with a distinctly. Australian voice through a range of techniques and unique narrative style. Transformation of the central protagonist is recounted by the credible idiomatic voice of the teenage narrator.

The brief prologue is powerfully evocative , engaging the readers interest when the Brennan family close “the front door of our home for the last time’ ‘The deceptively simple language communicates shame and regret and the rawness of pain is emphasised by the recurring reference to the need for silence ,’ ‘down, down we glided in silence’ . The prologues abruptly ends with the forthright affirmation of identity “My name is Tom Brennan and this is my story “ and the first person narrative establishes a clear social context and sulycitive perspective .

It creates a blunt immediacy and realistic tone, allowing the author for capture the emotional upheaval experienced by Tom’s family as they are forced to their country – town home. The novel essentially tells the story of how a fatal car accident due to drink-driving has torn the lives of the family apart . It is realistic in its tone of voice because it is pitched colloquially and makes use of expletives and slang, ‘As she crapped on’ , There is a believable ‘ voice’ in the description of Tom’s mannerisms, ‘I mumbled, giving my nuts a bit of a scratch through my boxes’.

The non-chronological structure gives greater emphasis to the changed conditions and the impact of the accident on individuals and the family. Tom's narrative voice with its reflective, flashback style ensures reader curiosity and dramatic tension through travelling between past and present. His sharp recall through description of events using similes, for example Daniele running away "into the bushes like silver light stroking through the trees" creates dramatic impact. Repetition and the use of bold font in the novel emphasises that in hindsight, "Daniele Brennan was an accident waiting to happen".

The technique of gradually revealing snippets of the past amidst the depiction of the consequences of the accident make us focus on the ramifications of what happened, rather than the event itself. Football is a recurring motif in the novel to show the Brannon legend and how the boys were respected as fine sportsmen. The use of sport jargon "John and Rory and I carved them out" ...scissors, flick passes and soft hands were the flavour of the day' emphasise how the football team and mateship through sport is part of Tom's identity.

It also emphasises the contrast between before and after the accident, Tom stating it "would never be the same... (football) would just be something to fill in time, the endless, endless time." Juxtaposition of past and present, happiness and misery helps the reader appreciate the difficulty of all members of the family in adjusting to their new lives. The novel uses a range of techniques to effectively tell the story of tragedy with a distinctively Australian voice. It appeals to a wide audience through its accessible language and characters.

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