

The curious case of benjamin button essay



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The Curious Case of Benjamin Button “ He seems to grow younger every year,” and so “ The Curious Case of Benjamin Button,” takes its place, adapted from the 1920’s literary work by F. Scott Fitzgerald about a man who is born in his eighties and ages backwards.

In both the literary work and the adapted film by David Fincher we are encountered with the same unusual circumstance, which Benjamin Button is forced to accept and unable change. Even though the literary work and the film carry the same theme of the time travelers tale of Benjamin Button they do so in different manners. The book and the film begin with different settings, and different situations. In the literary work by F. Scott Fitzgerald the story begins with the setting of Roger Button dressing himself hurrying for the hospital to welcome his newborn.

In the film adaptation we are first found in a hospital room with a dying lady and her daughter who is reading the story of Benjamin and transcends into the the scene of a running father with his newborn child in arms, trying to escape the eyes of the people. A man of “ enviable position, both social and financial,” he is encountered with the most difficult situation a man with his social status could not bear. His newborn, if we refer to him by his actual age, a man in eighties, fragile and tired looking was a tragic and horrifying reality. In the story Benjamin is born able to speak and the size of an elderly man, able to walk with a cane. The Benjamin in the book is born with the characteristics and abilities of a man in his eighties.

The film adaptation has Benjamin born with the characteristics of a man in his eighties, but the abilities of a newborn. Though both of the works

acknowledge the unusual birth they both interpret the case differently. In the film Benjamin is adopted from the stairs of a porch after being abandoned by his father. A colored woman by the name of Queenie finds him wrapped around a blanket and takes him as her own child and takes care of him in the home where she cares for elderly people.

It is not until he gets older that he finds who his father is, who he was and why his parents abandoned him. As a child he enjoys playing with other children his age, but is often removed from them because the people dislike the fact that such an elderly man enjoys playing with children. Benjamin is always found to be saddened by the fact that he is too young to enjoy spending time with the elderly people he lives with, and too old to be playing out with the kids his age. Throughout the movie he finds himself growing younger and smarter.

As each year passes he is able to do more than the year before and finds himself getting a job, meeting new people, and learning new things. He eventually grows old from the inside and too young from the outside. He begins to lose knowledge, is found in the streets confused and suffering from dementia. He grows from a being a ten-year-old boy to a one year old who is forgetting to walk and talk.

He passes away with the appearance of a newborn child, in the arms of his long first love, who is now in her eighties caring for him as a baby. In the book the case is different up to the point where he begins to lose his memory, and like the film turns too young and loses all abilities to think or remember. From the beginning Benjamin is born in the body of an elderly

man but he is born with the knowledge of an elderly man. He is able to walk and talk, have a conversation and able to distinguish what he likes and dislikes. He is raised by his real parents the Buttons and is often showered by toys and gifts from his father who wishes his son would have some interest in the toys he buys for him.

But Benjamin, is not interested in toys, he rather prefers reading the encyclopedia. His memory and knowledge is very keen but as Benjamin grew to be a little boy he, like in the film adaptation, forgets to speak, walk, and recognize people. The changes that were made from the literary work to the film adaptation were many. I had actually already seen this movie in the past and while reading the literary short story I was shocked at the many differences both of these works contained.

I believe that the changes made to make the film adaptation were good choices. I think that if the film would have been a lot more like the story it would have been less believable in the film. The directors knew well on how to bring the story to the audience without allowing us to at any moment thought the fact that the case could be fiction. Their choice to have Benjamin born the size of a newborn is a lot more believable than someone giving birth to a child the size of an elderly that speaks and walks.

Though the works were so different their theme of aging backwards remained. The film adaptation to the short story worked to the best of its abilities. Just to say that the film is a winner of three academy awards says a lot.