

The elephant essay



“ The writing style of Raymond Carver’s short story entitled “ Elephant” represent a simplistic, yet strong style of writing that is reminiscent of the great work of Earnest Hemmingway. There are several ways in which the writing style within Elephant harkens back to the stylistics of Hemmingway. Carver always goes straight to the point; like Hemmingway he focuses on describing the action and minimizes his analysis of that action. This is not saying that he does not analyse what his family is doing to him or what he is going through, but rather he presents his case simply and concisely so that the reader can naturally understand these feelings rather than having to engage in a long drawn out discussion of them, for example, “ I didn’t hear from my former wife. I didn’t have to. We both knew how things stood there,”.

Although not every American has such need and dependent family members, we all have experienced money problems with many of us knowing what it feels like to be taken advantage of. ” Raymond carver: A critical Consideration of diction Raymond Carver utilizes many different literary devices to manipulate his short stories. Out of all the possible literary tools, I feel that his change of words is the most important in creating a “ hook” that captures a reader. He tends to take a seemingly unimportant, commonplace event and turn it into a very interesting moment. There is a direct correlation between this diction and how these ordinary events become so intricate.

He has been known to revise his stories many different times, and thus, has different versions of them. One of the main purposes of revising is to ascertain exactly the best language and words to emphasize a theme or point within a story. He uses these exact measures to ensure that he can

maximize the impact of his stories. This heightened text often leaves ambiguous meanings and interpretations in his work. In Elephant, a man is driven to the end of his tether by his family who are always taking money from him. His brother first borrows some money from him and then says that he would pay their mother instead of giving the money back to the writer.

Unfortunately, the brother only gives fifty dollars or either seventy five dollars in three months although he had borrowed five hundred dollars. The mother said that her younger son, Billy was in bad shape and he was not going to pay and he did not pay like she predicted. She also said that he was giving all the normal excuses that somebody would give when they have a commitment and she, the mother went checking in mail boxes for the cheque that should come every month. He sends his mother a cheque every month because she guilt trips him about being alone and how nobody cares about her. He sends his daughter a cheque every month because her husband is a layabout slob and she's afraid she won't be able to feed the kids. The daughter was just evoking sympathy from her father so that the father will help.

She says that she will work in the fish cannery or sell root beer from a vending stand beside the road. As a father, obviously he would not want his daughter to be doing jobs like that so, he sends money instead just to support her family. The daughter also adds on by saying that her children has been drawing pictures of swing sets and swimming pool at the motel that he stayed in when he visited them last year. This is because her children will only get to go out, eat good food and have maximum fun when their grandfather is there because he spends money on them.

He sends his ex-wife a cheque every month to pay for his children. His former wife really did not care about what was going on. She didn't have too. All she knew was that she would get her money the first of each month, even if it had to come all the way from Sydney.

If she didn't get it, she just has to pick up the phone and call her lawyer. He reaches a breaking point when he has to send his wastrel son a cheque every month because he's off exploring America to 'find' himself. His son said that he would sell drugs in order to get money, but no father would allow that to happen so, he has no choice but to send money to his son. It is a complex story that peels back the layers of everyday life and experiences written in deceptively simple language. In the story Elephant, the figurative focus that the writer used was he compared his own family members to the white elephant. A white elephant means somebody who is a burden to you or somebody you have to keep even if you don't want too.

His family members are a gift from God that he has to keep even if he don't want them because they are such burden to him. He works so hard to get the money and they borrow, ask and demand as they wish. First of all, a brother who requires loaning him some money and never pays back yet asks for more money later. As the writer taught, people who borrows money and does not pay back would not come back asking for more money but his brother did. Then coming in the list is his mother who is greedy. She wants the cheque no matter what happens and then his daughter who just evokes sympathy from him to get the money.

Next, not forgetting his former wife who just wants the money every first of the month and does not care what happens. If she does not get the money she would call her lawyer. Last in the list is his son who is the first to go to college but he also demands for money from his father by emotional black mailing saying he would be a drug dealer in order to get some money. In a nut shell, Raymond Carver who works so hard to earn money is just being too nice to his family members by not being able to say no to a certain things is just being used up by his own family as the source of money. Those being the white elephants in his life are making him undergo stress that he has to work till he is old and he is not being able to get enough rest just because he has to give money to his family.

He was very tired always after work that it took him awhile to even bend down and unlace his shoes and just too tired to even get up and switch on the TV.