

Tom brennan



ESSAY??? Resilience determines the success of an individual??™s transition from one phase of life to another??™ Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from setbacks. ??? The Story of Tom Brennan??™, by JC Burke, is a novel which follows the main character, Tom, and his family, who deal with the dramatic event that the oldest son, Daniel, creates in a drink driving accident. An important theme that is carried throughout this text is drink driving and how events have effects on many people surrounding it, not only on the direct victims but also the strong theme of conflict runs deep throughout the novel.

JC Burke has structured this novel in a way that does not deal with the customary experiences of the victims family, but instead focuses on the ??? murderers??™ family, how each individual deals with crisis, and how such events can have a lasting and strong impact, much deeper than an observer naturally sympathizes with. Daniel??™s is one of a stubborn and aggressive teenage boy who overestimates his capabilities and develops raging jealousy towards his cousin Fin, over his sporting abilities and school girl, Claire. This results in the tragic events of the ??? sudden death??™ party where 2 teenagers are killed, and Fin is left a paraplegic at the expense of Daniel??™s stupidity. Irony is used in calling the match that St. Johns has to play in order to have a place at the final in the Wattle Shield, the ??? sudden death??™ match, as the resulting after party leaves two individuals suddenly dead. When the ??? sudden death??™ accident occurred, Tom was never able to be the same, ??? Above all the silence, was the piercing sound of death.

??? This quote shows Tom??™s un-preparedness in this situation and that it is something he has never experienced before. The ??? piercing??™ sound [of death] shows that he is so overcome by this situation that he suddenly becomes unaware of anything else. This is a major scene of the novel as it determines and changes the future of the Brennan??™s life and for Tom, the phrase is linked forever with what happened, and the irony is not lost to him. The events that occurred on the night of the ??? sudden death??™ party is revealed in flashbacks, and this is proven to be an effective technique used by JC Burke, as she admits that she broke the story ??? into flashbacks as a tool to get the reader to turn the page and to...

stimulate their curiosity.??? The flashbacks show the reader only a glimpse at a time of past events with Tom??™s present emotional state, thus increasing drama and emotions. Weaving the past into the story also means the reader??™s experience of meeting Daniel is not so straightforward ??“ we do not meet Daniel in ??? real??™ time until half way through the novel.

This makes it difficult for the readers to feel disdain towards him as we see that he feels guilt and remorse for his actions. ??? The Door??™, by Miroslav Holub, is a directive poem that encourages the reader to ??? open the door??™ and accept the change that will inevitably occur. There is resistance shown in the poem where the reader is wary and frightened by what he may find on the other side. ??? At least there will be a draught??? reassures the reader that even if it is not something exciting or huge, it stimulates curiosity by suggesting there will at least be something. The poem is trying to encourage the reader to simply see, and learn, what there is outside of the known life experiences. In ??? The Story of Tom Brennan??™, Tom is the one

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resisting the change and the new transitions occurring in his life. He is forced to move into the new town of Coghill but is unable to properly realise that Daniel is a criminal and Tom is unable to accept his families situation and changes they have experienced; loss off two friends, disabled cousin, son in prison, and a new home and town, and he is therefore unable to move forward and take advantage of what Coghill can offer him. His un-preparedness results in his inability to ??? open the door??™.

JC Burke has also stated that ??? part of Tom??™s journey is being forced to see situations and people as they really are, not as the thought they were. Tom??™s understanding of people evolves throughout the text. ??? Why don??™t they realise that we aren??™t like everyone else in here???

Tom thinks this to himself when he visits Daniel in prison. It shows that he is yet to come to terms with the extent of Daniel??™s situation and thus cannot understand why he is being treated as a criminal. Tom eventually accepts that his brother has in fact committed a serious criminal offence, but also realises that Daniel shows remorse and is trying his best to help others and to get his life back on track ??? shown by Daniel becoming a peer/leader for another young boy in custody, who has experienced a similar event to Daniel. After he realises this, Tom extends the hand of friendship to his brother again through a scrapbook that was made especially to commemorate their brotherly experiences together.

It is only when Tom sees that his future must be in Coghill, at least for a while, he comes to terms with his situation and ??? opens the door??™, thus illustrating a new pathway of life where is able to fully benefit from life in Coghill. ??? Father and Son??™, song lyrics, by singer Cat Stevens, is about

the fathers resistance to his sons willingness to leave his hometown, experience change and grow himself as an individual. In contrast to ??? The Story of Tom Brennan??™, the son is prepared for new phases of life and he attempts to initiate the change. This is shown by the sons lyrics ??? away, away, away. I have to make this decision, alone??? showing the son has grown to be an independent individual, and by the father??™s lyrics, ??? It??™s not time to make a change??? showing his resistance, but also showing the fathers concern and love for his son. However, the father??™s forceful advice seems to make the son more prepared to leave and fend for himself. In ??? The Story of Tom Brennan??™, Tom has no choice but to follow his father and his families decision as they feel the need to support each other. He is also underage and does not feel prepared enough to live by himself.

??? The Door??™ talks about many unusual sights such as ??? a dog rummaging, or a picture of a picture,??? creating the idea of endless possibilities. Such possibilities are not realised by protagonist Tom Brennan, where he earlier on would never have considered the possibilities i. e. that he would end up with gorgeous Chrissy Tulake or aim to be climbing mountains in Nepal with uncle Brendan. The lyrics in the song ??? Father and Son??™ say, ??? I try to keep these feelings inside, it??™s hard, but it??™s harder not to care.??? These lyrics relate to Tom Brennan as when he arrives in Coghill he feels as though he cannot express how he feels to his family or friends and he fears that if people find out about what happened in the ??? sudden death??™ accident they will react the same way as those in Mumbilli did, which would add onto the detrimental conflict that those in the Brennan

family have already experienced. This was thus a contributing factor into Tom's ability to open the door.

By opening the door, will initiate a change in the individual that will result in the development of perspectives. Tom Brennan's change from an ignorant child to the maturity of an adult as he learns from his experiences that there was a life beyond the idyllicness of the town of Mumbilli, that it takes time to heal, and that everyone heals at their own pace. This is symbolically shown in the celebration on his 18th birthday. The change in Tom Brennan is inevitably shown in the last chapter when Tom and Chrissy are together, That was the day Tom Brennan came back forever. But he comes back with more experience and maturity than he had before.

When comparing all three texts it becomes apparent that change is inevitable whether it is resisted, suppressed, forced upon or initiated by the individual, preparedness is not an issue in the transition into new phases of life it will occur whether you are prepared or not; but it is up to the individual to prepare for the changes they will experience as they move into their new world.