Sure Thing

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Submission date: 05-Nov-2021 03:48PM (UTC-0500)
Submission ID: 1694265152
File name: Use_of_the_Bell_in_Sure_Thing.edited.edited.docx (21.59K)
Word count: 1279
Character count: 6145

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Use of the Bell in "Sure Thing"

How do you prevent a conflict or disagreement from escalating? How do you prevent a topic of conversation that can potentially break a relationship? How do you build strong relationships? Well, David Ives, the author of *Sure Thing* knows too well how to build a relationship and prevent potential disagreement. The play consists of one scene, two main characters, and one specific setting. Ives uses the symbol of a bell to show how we can build relationships. The play is a mixture of a strange event between the two characters making it seem to have a combined comedy and a fantasy setting. Ives makes the situation in his play a surprise to the readers in a way they could not have expected. It is an interesting play describing people's normal lives and how best to change little aggravations and nuances to make life better and complete. Bill and Betty hold a repeated conversation, and a bell rings after every dialogue. The bell acts as a device to start a new dialogue from the beginning serving as a new opportunity to start love relationship and preventing a conflict from escalating.

Ives starts the play with Bill meeting Betty seated alone in a chair. He asks her whether the chair is taken, and immediately Betty responds, "It is", ending the conversation (Ives 1). A bell ring softly. To any reader, this conversation is quite dispirited considering how it happens and quickly ends with an outright refusal from Betty within the first seconds. From this

conversation, the author portrays how first meetings can either have good or bad results, and it all depends on the first impression from either party. Eric Wargo asserts that there is a need for an individual to forget whatever figure he/she has heard not to get intimidated when preparing for a job interview or a blind date. It is necessary to conduct new research that is likely to give another opportunity that might be more promising and fruitful (Wargo 30). He continues by stating that only a tenth of a second can reshape a stranger's impression, which seems to be a controversy. Ives reroutes the conversation between Bill and Betty, allowing them to start their conversation afresh repeatedly until the expected changes are made. He aims to ensure the relationship does not end in a blink of an eye. The use of a bell takes the characters back in time, making the play to what it is.

After a bad ending, the author ensures that the bell rings to start a new important moment shaping the drama. The bell is a crucial element in this play as it acts as a "redo" button where the conversation restarts. Ives's bell is similar to the bell used on boxing matches, divides rounds, and gives the boxers another winning opportunity. In the same case, the bell represents a "second chance" for Bill and Betty since every time it rings, it shows a dead-end for their conversation, after which another dialogue starts. Ives uses the bell as a signal of a second opportunity, where they can have a productive conversation with correct approaches and responses that are likely to bring their hearts together. In other words, the bell prevents complete breakdown of the relationship. The bells act as a buffer against a conversation that can lead to relationship breakdown. It prevents all topics of conversation that are potentially negative and unlikely to build relationships. The bell enables the characters to solve their differences resulting in mutual companions.

It is evident how Bill's attempt to go back to the same conversation had made a few changes in his thought, aiming at changing Betty's attitude towards him. He continues seeking permission to sit next to her, and several times, the bell rings until different results are experienced. The play provides a clear representation of how a relationship develops. The “bell” represents “time”, showing that persistence is key for any successful relationship.

A relationship is likely not to start successfully from a first instance, but time is a vital factor that helps to determine whether it will end or continue. Time gives a new start for those willing to pursue a relationship, and every chance comes with a better outcome than a previous one. This shows that for a relationship to thrive, time is everything and can determine whether it is meant to last or not.

Also, the bell demonstrates a sacred value of life and acts as a symbol of domination over fear. Bill confronts his fear and is determined to get Betty’s attention. It is clear in his mind what he wants and is focused on achieving it. After the bell rings, he wants to better his approach to Betty and persuade her to have a chance to sit next to her. It is not an easy move considering her response to the first conversation. According to how the bell rings softly, Bill sees another chance for him to search for love and never gives up. It is understandable that happiness does not come easily since people pursue it giving life value. In another instance, the bell teaches the people who act ignorantly towards signs that define their destiny. Betty gets a chance to discover her future love opportunity with time. Also, the selection of words by Bill to get Betty’s attention helps to show that whatever people say is likely to affect their relationships to be. In case of the absence of the bell, there is a possibility that the relationship would not have succeeded as it would have ended at the beginning of the conversation. Huebner argues that falling in love is one thing humans look forward to having. Everyone has a chance to seek out his or her chance to

love and be loved by getting a special person (Huebner 50). Searching for this special person is a "sure thing" as it all starts with an attraction and a conversation. But, if the timing is off or does it in the wrong way, the connection instantly shifts, and the intended romance ends. It can only be re-ignited by making things right, considering that time gives us every opportunity we would wish.

In conclusion, Ives uses the bell in the play to demonstrate a state of rejuvenation to what is broken or spoilt. Every ringing gives a new start to a better relationship for Bill and Betty until they have become lovers, even after Betty rejects every move by Bill to hold a conversation with her. The bell acts as a buffer, preventing potentially negative topics that could result to conflict or disagreement. The author uses the bell to bring harmony between the characters. The bell is meant to bring mutual understanding between Bill and Betty. The bell represents forgiveness and altruism, and with every interruption between their conversations, they get closer. It is unbelievable how Ives used the bell as an amazing device to help Bill and Betty form a perfect couple. In the same way, "time" gives us opportunities to be better each day, make better decisions and life choices as well as be happy. Ives passes a message of finding “sure thing” through persistence and making things right after getting even the slightest chance. Giving up, letting go, and failing to find a "sure thing" will likely cause unending without true love.

Works cited

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