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Literary Analysis

Introduction

The authors of different short stories have utilized different styles and tones depending on the theme they present. For instance, Sherman Alexie, in her short story "This Is What it Means to say Phoenix Arizona," brings to life how individuals live on the reservation by using various events and connections that link the character of Victor and their youthful friend Thomas. On the other hand, Edwidge Danticat uses an almost similar and varying tone in the story “A Wall of Fire Rising.” Danticat's story revolves around three individuals, including the father, a Guy, the wife, Lili, and their son Little Guy. Therefore, this paper will compare and contrast how the two short stories have used symbolism and foreshadowing as the unique style and the tone of the stories.

Symbolism style is used in Sharman’s story in different ways. Symbolism plays a critical role in a short story because it ensures that the readers understand the meaning of something beyond literal (Parzefall). For instance, fire is the most prominent symbol because it indicates something transmuting, cleansing and purifying. However, when the fire is not strengthened, it

dies. Thomas" builds-a-fire" indicates how he is presenting the stories about the country's heritage. "You should stop just once and listen when am giving a story in one of the places" (Alexie 75). This happened when victor apologized and Thomas accepted and asked for that in return. Moreover, the story shows the downfall of tough times and the reservations have triumphed some rigid periods. "Victor did not have money. The only individuals with money during reservation are firework sales individuals and cigarette sellers" (Alexie 59).

Sherman uses a flashback concerning foreshadowing the vision of Thomas-Builds-the-fire by providing the situation of a father. Therefore, the flashback allows the victor to realize that the poor relationship among his family members did not occur because of him but due to the father's decisions. Furthermore, Thomas becomes the bridge between victor and his father when he explains the story that "Thomas recalls having a dream that informed him to go in Spokane and stay by the falls between the city as he waits for the mark." (Alexie 69). The flashback makes victor understand and develop a good relationship with his father by realizing the type of father he was.

The story has varying tones from the beginning to the end. The author has used different attitudes; however, it finally creates an aggressive tone. The story has infused a serious theme with good use of humor. Although the tone is bleak and sometimes becomes cynical, the humor starts at the beginning when victor goes to the tribal council. An amusing and thoughtful tone then appears in the statement, "it seems like you Indians have a shared thing" (Alexie 64). this indicated how the Bureau of Indians has decreased Indians to helplessness and handled them like kids.

Danticat has used symbolism style in the story several times. For instance, Danticat has used symbolism to create emotions. Tension is a critical element in this story when Richard states that “the strain among the caregivers’ opinions on their kid’s imminent life is represented in their understanding of the balloon.” (Danticat 62). In this context, the balloon symbolizes liberty from societal restrictions because it was a comparatively new part of aviation technology at that time. Also, symbolism is used when Lili states that “he likes to look at the sky” (Danticat 72). The statement indicates the character attribute of Lili, symbolizing respect for her husband, indicating that a woman can express herself and be independent and respectful to their partners.

Foreshadowing is used differently in Danticat’s story. For instance, during the last evening with the family, Guy frequently explains to Lili that she will take care of their son’s future. Lili did not realize this since Guy used the term “you” and not "we." Also, another foreshadow appears when Guy expresses to Lili his dreams of flying away in the balloon. The final foreshadow that indicates Guy might kill himself is when he states that his father was “a very poor struggling man all his life” (Danticat 75). The statement shows that his dreams and desires were not achieved because he lived in a one-room shanty house, struggling to provide for his family.

The tone of Danticat's story is nonassertive. The story brings a feeling of desperation across the characters. For instance, Guy feels stranded because of his life and the environment. However, the signs of hope can be seen at the start when little Guy narrates the lines when playing Boukman. Nevertheless, as the story progress, Guy gets the reality and the tone

becomes sad, slow and empty when the main character becomes depressed. Furthermore, suspense and anxiety kick in when Guy takes the hot air balloon.

Conclusion

Having compared and contrasted how the two short stories have used symbolism and foreshadowing as the unique style and the tone of the stories, it is clear that both stories have used proper literature style and tone to elevate the different emotions and moods of the reader. Nevertheless, the styles of symbolism and foreshadowing have played a significant role in making the reader understand the story because it influences their interpretation of the literature. Finally, both Alexie and Danticat have used styles and tone to create mood, images and meaning in their work.

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