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Thesis statement

In most literary works, authors tend to embrace creativity by using symbolism as a literary device. They might use symbols like objects or characters when representing an abstract idea beyond the literal meaning. Any symbolic concept used inhibit different corners of people's daily life. The “Hills like white elephants” is a story that Hemingway uses images, settings, characters, actions, and motifs symbolically to make the work appear more than events described and meaning it contains. Hemingway uses white elephants, drinks, landscape, train station and bamboo curtains as symbols in a bid to explore different themes in the story “*Hills like white elephants*.”

In the story of Hemingway’s “*Hills like white elephants*”, “white elephants” is a symbol that represents something different from what anyone can think. Literary the “white elephants” can be understood as very important valuable possessions that owners cannot let go and its cost is not worth any cost. Now, in the story, it represents unborn baby being discussed by the couple. They are naturally rare and considered essential to reflect on something vital likely to happen. The image of the white elephants has been introduced by a girl in the story saying hills beyond the stations appear like white elephants (Grant 267).

In the story, Hemingway introduces how light is vital in the second line of the story and offers a description of how the view relates to darkness. Here, light is used symbolically. The pounding

light, as well as the kind of heat produced by the sun, suffuses several events in the story. In the story, the man says "Come on back in the shade," "You must not feel that way". The girls respond, "I don't feel anyway." "I just know things." This reveals the impact of the light from the sun for the two. From the story, the sun heat from the sun is evident drying hills grass and moving passengers near the bars and station's shade. Light from the sun seems to be very harsh, but it represents honesty and truth which is not faced by Jig and the man, and they avoid it as they talk about challenges are facing in their relationship. Avoidance of the light, as evident in the story, represent destructive decisions. The sunshine shapes how characters see things. Sun casts its light on white hills with no shadow, which symbolically represents thoughts of the girl in the story (Yirinec, 407).

Literary, crossroads symbolizes situations that require characters to make the most important decision in life. In the story, the trains stations and Railroad tracks have been used as symbols in the story. The author chooses the train station as the setting of the story. The train station has a couple tracks with each track symbolizing different life paths. We are introduced to the awaited trains that take people on different journeys. A couple is seen in this station waiting for the express train (Link, 66). There is a great symbolic role played by the couple with their prolonged waiting at the train stations. The long wait in the trains station represents a hard decision in resolving, direction to take on their relationship.

In the setting of the story, bar curtains are mentioned by Hemingway and are described as "made of strings of Bamboo beads." The curtains have painted with ads. The curtains symbolize several things. For example, curtains represent the existing barrier between Jig in the story and the American man who they take a drink within the bar. Jig takes hold on two bead curtains which make the man believes she is a catholic. So "bead curtains "represent Jig's religion. The beaded

curtains seem to be like rosary, which lends some insight into why Jig is reluctant to terminate her pregnancy based on religious beliefs. Generally, the beads in the bamboo curtain represent Jig's religion which separates the two of them.

Hemingway uses terrain or landscape as a symbol ⁵ in the story "*Hills like white elephants*". The rugged landscape offers ^a critical thematic element in the story. The terrain is described as "Brown and Dry" with neither trees nor shade. This is evident at the beginning of the story. The story reads as if it is taking place in a desert because of the dryness of terrain. This terrain represents the couple's condition of loneliness as well as alienation as seen in the story. Besides, one side of rail tracks has neither trees nor shade while the other side is full of trees with a field of grains along the Ebro's bank. Here there is the fertile and barren landscape is contrasted to ultimately represent the outcome faced by the girl based on her decision (Renner, 27). The girl describes hills along River Ebro as "Lovely Hills", and thus he is I dilemma to terminate her pregnancy. The fertility of the environment or terrain along the river represents the pregnancy of this girl. The ending of pregnancy is like destroying the beauty of the landscape. Generally, the land itself represents a conflict of the bareness of the girl's relationship with the man as the man urges for abortion that she is not ready for, and her motherhood possibility.

Drinks ⁷ in "*Hills like white elephants*" is also ^a symbol portrayed by Jig and the man. As they drink the alcohol Jig says, ¹ "They look like white elephants", I have never seen one. The man responds, "No you wouldn't have." Alcohol, in this case, is used to represent a source of relief for a complicated relationship. The alcohol also relief them from harsh conditions of hot sunlight. This is evident whereby, in this short story, an extraordinarily large amount of liquor and beer is consumed by the two, and they keep ordering for more drinks (Hashmi 72). Most importantly, drinks like alcohol are not portrayed with positivity. Water is the source of life and

nurtures living organisms to facilitate growth, but alcohol in the story is for temporal relief to avoid losing oneself.

Conclusion

To sum up, symbolism is well evident ² in the story. Hemingway uses symbols to reflect on the themes and all that the story is about. It portrays some aspects of symbolism. White elephants, light, rail tracks, bar curtains, and landscape to build the entire story and indirectly give the meaning of the story. Drinks that the man and Jig takes represent the source of relief to challenges faced in their relationship. Light is a symbol used to represent the truth and honesty lacking in man and girl's relationship. The bead curtains portray religion which leads to a different decision between the girl and American man.

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