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by B B

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Short Stories

Part 1

The story I have selected is Exhalation by Ted Chiang. The story is about cyborgs living on a separate planet and use mental lungs for breathing daily. The narrative is set on a planet occupied by Cyborgs, who mount mental lungs to breathe every day. Filling posts – where they refill their air source similarly function as the main means for social interactions. Besides, they develop communal pleasure through this collective action of exchanging lungs. Just as lungs are exchanged amongst persons and regions, so are updates and gossip (Ted).

In one instance, during a discussion, the protagonist, an anonymous scientist, gets to hear gossip about tower chronometers in their region having sped up, sounding earlier than when they were supposed to. Additionally, he heard about similar news from neighboring regions as well. Horologists examined further, but they could not find any deficiencies in those tower clocks, which irritated his inquisitiveness. The scientist takes it upon himself to elucidate this mystery due to the absence of existing reference material to perform the research. He assembles complicated machinery, stocks up on supplementary lungs, and makes a standby strategy for rescue in an accident. The scientist begins to view the configuration of the brain and ultimately understands that their memory was a pattern of air circulation in their brains through his

precisely executed surgery. At the same time, the clocks were not fast; rather, the air flowing through everyone's brain was slow (Ted).

Therefore, it centered on the scientist's consideration that they were transforming air at high compression to air at low, leading to ultimate notwithstanding the terminal state of stability. These discoveries spurred a lot of deliberation in the community to eventual validations that essentially appeared factual. The end to their world was an assured thing as they knew it.

I chose this story because it is an impeccable combination of philosophy and science and offers enthusiastic readers of both disciplines of science and philosophy. Furthermore, the story appeals to philosophers and scientists. Nonetheless, scientifically, one might view the messages as wordy. However, there are numerous and deep philosophical posts to take home, so I chose this story.

Another reason why I chose this story is in line with the current coronavirus pandemic that is ravaging the entire world. The story closely relates to the current situation of the world. I pictured a scenario whereby filling up oxygen in the lungs or replacing the lungs would be easier amid this pandemic like it is depicted in the story. The instance depicted in the story when the scientists discover that death is certain majorly through loss of pressure leading to the ending of motive power and eventually end of thought. The author explains that the universe would have reached perfect equilibrium at this state, which is synonymous with death. I think that currently, perfect equilibrium translates to the death of COVID-19 patients due to insufficient oxygen.

Finally, the story could be translated into a tight plot leading to a specific highlight, keeping the story interesting, on track, and clear most of the time for it to be incorporated to fit a short story course. Additionally, the story can be incorporated to fit a short story course by

limiting the use of words and trying to as brief as possible. Although authors are not limited to the length of their narrations, in this case, it would be advisable for the author to limit his words and capture the reader's attention earlier on for the story to fit in a short story course.

Part 2

The readings I have selected that have connected themes are *La Negra Blanca* by Roxane Gay and *Zimmer Land* by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyan. The major similarity expressed in the theme by both authors is racial profiling. *Zimmer Land* is narrated from the viewpoint of an African-American worker of a mythological theme park whose white clients are exhilarated to act out their imaginations of administering ruthless justice to individuals of color. They regard as intimidating on sight or under the pretense of problem-solving, as its operation declaration states. Such dystopian themes persist all through the collection (Adjei-Brenyah and Roques 96).

Similarly, in *La Negra Blanca*, the main character's parents are black and white. However, on her first appearance on the job, her best friend at work tells her to dance to a certain song because people liked it when white girls danced to that particular song. Nonetheless, most people assumed that she was a white girl because she had straight blonde hair and green eyes. Additionally, the author suggests she was not ashamed of who she was. Even though, in Baltimore, it was easier to be a white lady with a black girl's backside than it was to be a black lady who looked white or any other kind of girl for that matter (Gay 62).

Similarly, the theme of violence is evident in both narrations. *La Negra Blanca* depicts how one of the regular clients stalks the main character and further questions himself expressing that he did not understand what the lady was doing with a waiter when she could be with a wealthier person like him. In this instance, the man storms into the lady's house, shove her to the

floor, beats her up and rapes her in a violent ordeal. Likewise, the violence depicted in the story Zimmer Land is mainly individuals heading to the amusement park end up conveying artificial ammunition to people they categorize as lawbreakers based on their skin complexion. A black American whose work is to enact passersby who decline to disclose his intentions and identity is set on convincing administration to transform the situations, so guests essentially interrogate their preconception. A correspondingly composed individual challenges the respectful, even-toned intolerance of the directors, yet civilization remains to disregard the appeals for equality. Nevertheless, although the violence depicted in both instances could be of a different magnitude, both demonstrate an equal share of unfair treatment (Adjei-Brenyah and Roques 87)

On the contrary, the major difference in the theme of the narrative is the storyline. In *La Negra Blanca*, the predominant theme is sexual harassment, defilement, and mistreatment of ladies. This is evident when a lady was being sexually harassed by his employer and states that she badly needed the job, thus submitting to his advancements. Similarly, the same man goes ahead and rapes the main lady character in leaving her traumatized. However, the story mainly focuses on the man's despicable and racial sexuality deliberating over the physical details that leave a questionable taste. Contrastingly, the principal theme is the struggle by a black protagonist seeking to transform the narrative in an amusement park, with the majority of occupants being white regulars. These patrons violently relish their racial predisposition under the guise of justice, judgment, and settling concerns (Adjei-Brenyah and Roques 101). Finally, I would not recommend that children be exposed to such an environment with all that is depicted in the story. However, the author narrates that Zimmer Land would officially open for all ages, which I would highly advocate against, citing that the environment is unsuitable for children. This phenomenon shows the difference in the themes between the two stories.

Works Cited

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