The Ascent

In the story “The Ascent” Ron Rash portrays inclusive treatment of escapism. In the initial part of the story, the tendency is displayed in bitter aspects of life. The daydreams of the characters reflect their desire for changing or determination for having a better life. Different aspects of life lead to certain circumstances that encourage characters to formulate a strategy. The concept of escapism is used for explaining how a human can numb himself to the stresses of life. The exploration of the darker themes reflects the reality of life. The combination of social realism and poetic imagery allow Rash to transmit the themes of reality.

Jared, a young five years old boy ventures into the Great Smoky mountains for escaping his reality. The story depicts that the young boy encounters the complexities of life that convinces him to leave home. He plays the role of a protagonist by acting against his reality. His association with poverty allow him to witness the selfish side of the world. The family was always running out of money as Rash states, “on Monday morning the Baggies were empty and his parents were sick. His mother sat on the couch wrapped in a quilt, shivering” (Rash 285). Jared encounters the darker side of reality due to his poor background. The issues faced by him represents the real aspects of life that undermine the concept of happiness. Another incident that transmits the themes of helplessness is when Jared attempts to return the ring. His father sells the ring for money that reflects the misery of the family. Most of the struggles are due to the low socio-economic status of the family (Rouse). The tragedy also transmits helplessness becoming discernible when Jared's father had to take a ring from the dead woman's finger. This is due to the deprived status and devastation encountered by the family (Walker). The young boy is the part of tragic life that provokes him to take a different role for changing reality.

Rash stresses on settings to minor thoughts that transmits the tragedy of Jared. The themes of drug, poverty and powerlessness set the direction for the story. Jared witness situations that make him realize his low status or lack of power. The realization becomes apparent when his father mentions, “you and your momma go ahead and light our Christmas tree. I'll be back in a few minutes.' ‘It's not a Christmas tree,' Jared said. ‘Sure it is, son,' his father replied, ‘it's just one that's chopped up is all” (Rash 283). There are no celebrations for the poor because they are struggling to survive. This makes Jared learn that he belongs to the poor family that is always concerned about money and ways of getting finances. Thee settings depict that the parents of Jared lack the ability to do anything that could contribute to the happy life of a young boy. It also reflects that Jared fails to accept the life provided to him by his parents (Spill). His encounter with the darker side of his world motivates him to escape and choose a better and different life.

The language sets the tone for the fiction that uses winter scene, transmitting stark and cold themes. The tone is used appropriately for transmitting the central idea of the protagonist. His belief of fixing everything depicts his attempts of challenging the world (Rash). Jared decides to stand against all odds by accepting the challenge and taking a role that required determination and authority. His decision of changing his life can be witnessed as his bravery (Spill). This also reflects that he rejects the harsh realities of life by standing against the darkness and misery. Rash has used bold themes for expressing the feelings of devotion and hope. When Jared fails to acquire his dreams he decides to choose a difficult path. The settings of coldness transmit the idea of quietness and calmness.

Escapism transmits the themes of attaining desire. The life that Jared chooses is entirely different from that of his parents. Rash incorporate themes of escapism for expressing the thoughts of the boy who is convinced to change his fate. Foreshadowing used by the author explains that the boy will leave his parents. The bold step taken by the boy makes him unconcerned about the dangers of mountains. His determination is visible, “Jared placed the knife in his pocket and climbed into the back seat and closed the passenger door” (Rash 281). The themes of escapism are also apparent when Jared exclaims, "I have fixed it so it'll fly" (Rash 287). This indicates that he remains unaware of the consequences until he experiences death. The author through escapism transmits the risks involved in such a decision. Although Jared fails to attain his dream he disconnects himself from the tragic world. His rejection confirms his determination and aims for a better life.

Rash in the story creates the character of the protagonist, Jared who is a young boy struggling with the reality of life. The young boy becomes the victim of his choices when he attempts to fly from his miserable life. He stands against all odds by accepting the challenge and taking a role that required determination and authority. Rash has used dark settings for transmitting the themes of helplessness and tragedy.

Work Cited

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