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[Subject]

[Date]

Tracks

Novel “Track” was written by Louise Erdrich that was published by Henry Holt & Co. in 1988. The story explored the correlated lives of four Anishinaabe households living near Argus (a fictional town), North Dakota. The story used multiple characters and in most of the parts, the author used first-person narratives. The book is based on series and it was the third book out of four. The most interesting part of the book was that although it was the third part it came first which highlighted the number of characters and explained their backstory. The main purpose of the paper is to analyze the transformation of Pauline throughout the story with the help of storyline and direct quotes. It is crucial to understand the type of change whether it was positive or negative and its impact on other lead characters.

**Themes**

The story has multiple themes that can be observed throughout the story. Characters were revolving around these themes and the author used it to create a strong story plot. The first major theme that the story tells is magical realism. Magical realism was used to explain the difference between traditional beliefs and Christianity. Magic was the term that did not display as an integral part of the social order instead it reflected the cultural collision with a realistic setting. The second major theme is interconnection between different families including Kashpaws, pillagers, Lazarres, and Morrisseys. The last theme of the story was survival that was explained through elements like death, medical and health issues, and rape.

**Transformation of Pauline**

Pauline Puyat was a female character in the novel who was a mixed-blood woman. In the novel, she transformed and experienced different circumstances. She lost all her family members except her father. She was introduced in the novel as a shopper at a store where character Fleur was working. Therefore, Pauline's character has an impact on Fleur's character in the story. There is the division of the chapter throughout the novel in which few chapters are based on Pauline's perspective that is Pauline explained the story as the first person while in remaining chapters Nanapush told his point of view to his granddaughter named Lula. The first chapter is based on Nanapush's point of view so there was less discussion about the Pauline character while the main focused was given to the interconnection of Fleur and Nanapush.

In the second chapter, Pauline's character was discussed in detail. The interconnection between Fleur and Pauline was discussed. Pauline explained that she saw Fleur being washed up from the lake twice that is when she was a child and when she was fifteen years old. Pauline noticed an incident that happened with fleur and believed that lake monster Misshepeshu desires her that is why she did not die and all other men during incidence died. Point of view of Pauline about Fleur can be understood through the lines, "nobody dared court her because it was clear that Misshepeshu, the waterman, the monster, wanted her for himself." Pauline was scared of Fleur due to her mysticism power. As both were working in the same store, she noticed weird things linked with the Fleur including turning her footsteps (tracks) into animal-like paws. Due to her strange behavior, people of the town asked Fleur to leave and she left the place on her own. Later on, Pauline and Fleur again interconnected in Argus. In Argus, Fleur got raped by the men when Pauline decided not to help Fleur that shaped discomfort in their relationship and covered the path for self-punishing of Pauline and she became passionate about her religious beliefs. The incident of Fleur rape and reaction of Pauline changed the character of both the women and their perspective towards the world and men was also changed. Fleur became pregnant and gave birth to Lulu. They both did not discuss the father of Lulu, however, Pauline believed that the father of Lulu was either of the men who raped Fleur or the monster of Lake who wanted her.

In the third chapter return of Fleur and Pauline in Nanapush was discussed. People of Nanapush were happy to see Fleur back as she was the only one who can handle the monster of the lake. Fleur did not tell about her past and when Pauline told her story to the people but she was considered a liar. "The practice of deception was so constant with her that it got to be a kind of truth," (Davidson, 2017) this line explains that people took Pauline as a person who tells lie to get the attention of others. However, with the introduction of the new character Eli who admired Fleur, Pauline's words became effective. When Eli's mother found that Fleur was pregnant Eli approached Pauline to know the past of Fleur and decided to take responsibility for Fleur. Fleur gave birth to a girl and Nanapush named him Lulu. This chapter showed that the relationship between Pauline and Fleur affected the perception and decision of Nanapush and Eli while Fleur got guardian by the information given by the Pauline to Eli.

In the fourth chapter, Pauline told about her story that how she left Argus and Dutch no more needed her support as he became closer to Regina. Pauline found an opportunity to leave Dutch and Ragina and she went with Bernadette to sit vigil for Mary. On her stay, Pauline observed that Mary wanted to die so cut the rope to save Mary. However, next morning Pauline was found up to the tree where it was not easy to climb and suddenly people considered her spiritual and Pauline "became devious and holy, dangerously meek and mild,” (Davidson, 2017). Pauline's relationship with Fleur, Eli, and daughter Lulu increased when she noticed that Eli was taking interest in a girl Sophie. When Fleur came to know about their relationship, she asked about it from Pauline. Pauline told the truth to Fleur but she did not react and asked Sophie to go back. However, Pauline noticed the tear in the statue of Mary in the church that no one else noticed. That tear was the symbol of sorrow of Fleur due to Eli cheat.

In the 6th chapter, Pauline continued to story and explained the incident when she got pregnant. She believed that she was the wife of God but later revealed that it was the baby of Napoleon. Pauline decided to die along with her baby because she believed that "if I gave birth, I would be lonelier," (Davidson, 2017). While healing after giving birth to the child, Pauline got the feeling of guilt to ignore Fleur during her pregnancy and all the deaths that took place around her but she did not pay attention to any. She believed that God is showing her what she has done to others. Pauline saw all people dying who were helping her but Fleur was there to her, however, she was unable to save her baby.

The last chapter narrated by Pauline was based on Pauline's sorrow and seeking forgiveness. She was going to the convent for being a nun but before that, she wanted to ask for forgiveness from Fleur as she always gave harm to her and her relationship with others. She did not help Fleur at the time of pregnancy. She told about her past to the people. She also helped Sophie to go close to Eli. Due to all these deeds, she observed that her belief in God was becoming weaken and she was tested by Satan. Therefore, she decided to visit Fleur for forgiveness. Therefore, she decided to go back to the convent and ask forgiveness from God by spending the rest of life for him. She on the way back to church threw her clothes and covered herself with the mud and leaves. When she reached to church, nuns took her inside the convent and healed her. She left her past life and started to serves as Sister Leopolda.

All these chapters indicate the Pauline character had a great influence on other story characters. Pauline did not cooperate with Fleur and become the cause of her family's issues. In addition, she left Dutch and Regina for her own sake. She was the woman with self-interest. Therefore she developed difficulties for other people. However, at some points, her behavior got a positive outcome somehow. For instance, when Eli approached her to know about Fleur, she told 'whole truth to him. However, Eli decided to ignore Fleur's past and asked her to be his partner. However, Pauline left Dutch in a difficult time and did not help Fleur during labor. All her deeds came in front of her when she became pregnant with the baby of Napoleon. At this moment her dawn started and she started to realize how bad she was with the people who cared about her and showed trust in her. Transformation of Pauline from a mean lady to spiritual and then nun give the moral that life experience and people own deed changes their life and people around them.

**Work Cited**

Davidson, R. (2017, November 1). Tracks. Retrieved December 20, 2019, from PenguinRandomhouse.com website: https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/37170/tracks-by-robyn-davidson-with-a-new-postscript-by-the-author/