[Your Name]

[Instructor Name]

[Course Number]

[Date]

Hills Like White Elephants

**Introduction**

Earnest Hemingway in his short story provided the conversation between a man and a woman. Both are waiting at the train station in Spain and the man emphasizing his mate to get through abortion. There is a dialogue that unfolds the inner feeling of women who rejected the advice of men. The characters presented in the story are surrounded by trees, valleys, hills and fairy meadows. Despite their conversation characters neither listen to each other nor understand the point made by one to others. There is a rift that goes on between both and here the writer used his ‘Theory of Omission' as a response to contends that words in a story should be short and proverbial. The unwritten story is present somewhere which the author wants to remain hidden.

**Discussion**

It is an interesting fact that Hemingway unfolded his theoretical approach by omitting the word ‘Abortion', which is clearly the subject of the story. To enhance the literary taste such type of writing is common among authors. The noticeable absence of words with the presence of the theme is quite convincing for the readers to read between the lines. How one can be clear about the word abortion despite the writer has deliberately omitted it from the text. This is a difficult question for the common readers, but those who understand the style in literature can easily verify. For example, when the man pushes women to get through abortion, it uses words ‘awfully simple' and ‘not really an operation at all'. Further, the man derives the female to remain intact with her struggle and will be with her during an abortion.

There is no mention of the health issue related to women in the story which shows that operation has nothing to do with any illness. Describing an elective procedure, the author uses ‘she does not have to do if she does not want to' (Kong-xi 6). One of the most important proverbs implied by the author in his story is the claim that ‘just to let the air in,' which significantly reflected the operation for abortion. There is a clear message for the reader that man is pushing women to get through it and let us have an open, free life. The entire story is full of symbolism as when the women are asked for operation in a way that, is she ready for the operation she responded by posing a question. ‘And you really want to' shows that man has some stake which indicates that women in the story are pregnant (Rankin 235). The interesting point of the story makes it clear that man does not want any third person to come and distract it from the way he is dealing with women.

When man asserts ‘I don't want anybody but you. I don't want anyone else,' this shows that there is someone else unless the women get ready for abortion. With such symbolism and use of proverbial language, Earnest Hemingway provides significant space to the critics of his time and those which came after him, to criticize the story in a different way. For example, the early writers reject the story with the claim that it is an anecdote. Some of them are of the view that the story does not reflect the traditional style, so it has no plot nor a proper structure. It is important to note that most of the modern writers are also confused by the story because of its style and omission of words (Rankin 236). It would be an exceptional thought of the reader, which could be expert in a literary language to know about the argument occurred between both male and female in the text. The couple is discussing abortion which is not only legal but also dangerous and immoral for society.

The characterization of the story is also not traditional and early objections to the story cited the fact that female is simply referred to as a girl while male as a man. Lack of physical description of each character along with clothes or anything about personality creates troubles for the general reader. For example, in the traditional stories, authors usually describe the voice, dress and overall physique of the players in their texts. Further, the story also lacks background which shows that the author only wanted his reader to remain in confusion with ambiguous ideas. This can be the technique to remain in the lines of literary critics where every author could have its own point about the phenomena explained in the text (Rankin 236). Anything could have happened if the author himself guides the reader through pointing at a certain level of the text, however, this is also not available in the case of this story. The narrative technique implied by the writer is the nineteenth-century methodology of narrative an event or short story. Such type of techniques is used by Charles Dickens and Trollope.

The other side of the argument against or in favor of this story is the intention of the writer. For example, the use of dialogue between both males and females is to convey the meaning of the entire text. It is very interesting that despite unclear meaning and the discussion about abortion, we the reader have concluded everything through the way both exchange words with each other. It was in 1990, that there was a tradition of reading between the lines. Such type of readers was accustomed about the hidden meaning and don't want to have just and clear message of the literary fiction presented before them (Link 68). People like to have speculations which can be considered in the case when one takes notice of the language used in the text. It was their luggage ‘labels on them from all the hotels where they had spent nights.' One can have an opinion about the couple who is married legally or going to be married and the baby could impose a burden on their free and lavish life. There is significant detail about the elephant which is symbolizing through the mountains.

As the girl looked to the mountain it has the opinion that these hills are ‘like white elephants.' There is a tense atmosphere between both when the man speaks ‘Oh, cut it out.' What reflected here is the apology by women when she realizes that mountains are not looking like white elephants but she symbolizes to show her inner feeling. Women downed towards the idealistic world because of her approach and sensitivity in the story and her character visualize the natural world where grains, fertility, beauty, and love are the common phenomena. The exchange of words among both provides the women to come out of the idealist world and become mature in responding to the man standing beside her (Link 71). The end of the conversation is significant as women take control of herself and of the situation. Replying to the repeated requests by the man, she responds that please shut up and stop asking for an abortion. During the end of the dialogue, the word ‘please' is repeated seven times which shows the overwhelming hypocrisy of man towards women.

There is a satire on the language and communication style of humans in the story. Hemingway has rightly chosen the dialogue with the nature of omitted words. The main aim of the story was also to show how human-animal have mastered the language with significant power but don't know how to communicate (Link 71). The selection of titles in this regard is very important. The story is deceptively simple but certain issues and in-depth feeling shows that interpersonal communication cannot be straightforward. With this one can acknowledge that relationships are not so simple or straightforward. Despite severe criticism on the style and structure of the story, it is imperative that it gives a deeper meaning to the reader for understanding various dimensions of single happening. It makes the reader remain critical of the things and try to be creative in approaching multiple events of real life. How we talk, communicate and discuss the issue of our life is also the lesson portray in the story. The arguments and the message in the story are very clear which one should understand in real-time as well. In other terms, an American man has some sympathy for the women to remain in a positive and emotional relationship with him. He emphasized that how much he cares for a girl but the response he receives is something which told him not to care about those things which are personal to women.

For some critics, the short story is the surrender of a female protagonist to her wishes of a partner for going through an abortion. Before the era of 1980, there was one way to interpret the story which was straight and clear. However, after that time there was professional writing where every author tries to have its own points. For example, there were three dimensions of the story which include morality, plausibility, and simplicity. The term simplicity here explains the relationship between the fictional world and text explained by the person who reads it (Link 72). The idea of plausibility concerned with the verisimilitude of the fictional world created by the reader. Such type of reader has good knowledge of literary genre and thing to understand literature. Further, morality is the way where the reader could have values that become compatible with the text presented before him. There is a variety of reading that emerged after the 1980s and we must know the conflicts that occurred with every knowledge-based interpretation. There must be proper weight given to those who are the basis for the enjoyment of a positive artistic appreciation.

A significant amount of attention is given to the readers of professional style especially those associated with teaching and education. With the short text, there must be important given to each word because of the understanding and knowing the real meaning. For example, some of the writing relies on the precise meaning of single words in the text as done by Hemingway in his short story. Such type of strategy can be useful in removing the contradiction and making sense of the words. Various tensions and contradictions are criticized by authors in this text because of the ambiguity created in the development and understanding of gaps (Link 72). Utterances of a girl in the text are inviting challenge and intimacy to the man who directly wants for abortion. The answers of the girl by rejecting conversation and discussion on abortion are signaling that man is narrow-minded and have no ideas to see the world behind him.

The lack of confidence of man in the story shows that responses and the way he was treated by women have implied influence. It is due to the fact that Hemingway wanted to present man as poor in communication with foolish ideas while women as decent and sensitive. He also gives weight to women over her ending conversation where she asks a man to shut up and remain intact with the business he is used to. When the girl told me that ‘I am fine' this sentence shows the emotional state of girl rather providing physical position. It can be interpreted in terms of cooperation and openness as it depends on the degree of attribution for a girl in the story. The important aspect here is to understand that ideologies, sensibilities, and values are incorporated in every reading and these also have a relation with gender and the importance of female character. For authors of some literary background, the girl in this story is helpless because she has surrendered before the person to whom she is not supposed to respond and surrender (Link 73). It became a male-dominated world where women are pushed to do what their fellow life partner asked and direct them.

**Conclusion**

Concluding the discussion, Earnest Hemingway has chosen an interesting style of writing a short story in a time when there was little understanding of literary fiction. ‘Hills Like White Elephant' is a rich story that convinces the reader to read it every time with a different angle. One can consider the fields of fertile grains with the hot and dry side of the valley. Such symbolism of the train tracks creates an interesting image in the mind of the reader. A female reader can put the question to herself, whether she is ready for abortion to save the love of her husband or remain free and independent. Answering the questions might lead the reader to understand the real meaning of the short story.

Works Cited

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