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|  | **TITLE: GRANDMAMA’S FUNERAL**  **POET: KONAI HELU THAMAN** | **TITLE: GRIEF**  **POET: ANGELA M OXLEY** |
| **THEMES/MESSAGES** | One major theme portrayed by Thaman in her poem “Grand mama’s Funeral” is **Social event-** whereby sad and solemn occasions such as funerals are slowly turning into social events and family gatherings. Events such as funerals tend to draw many people together which calls for much feasting. Thaman depicts this through the lines “freshly dug earth ovens gaping among strangled fowls and enslaved pigs surrounded by mounting heaps of taro transported their by grand mama’s countless relatives”. This reveals that the main attraction of the funeral is the after burial feast which is awaited eagerly by many relatives.  Another remarkable theme depicted by Thaman is **greed** whereby most of the relatives just attend the funeral with the intention to gain something out of it. For instance in the lines “pieces of white and red cloth emerge from hanging wreaths of marigold and hibiscus ready to be stripped from their origins by greedy relatives who watch all night long” it is revealed that most of grand mama’s relatives had their eyes set on the items decorating grand mama’s death bed and would take them as soon as they got a chance. | Through her poem grief, Angela portrays the theme of **reality** whereby sometimes it is difficult or painful to face realties such as death. In the poem, it is seen that after the passing away f Jim, he is greatly missed by all including his mother, the persona, his girl and even the street kids. The lines “mother stood and stared and still makes his empty bed” reveals the depth of the mother’s grief and her inability to come in terms with reality. The persona also continued to tend to Jim’s garden long after his death which shows that the persona also found difficulty in accepting Jim’s death.  Similarly, another theme conveyed by Angela is **grief**. When a loved one passes away people are bound to grief. As depicted in the poem, after the passing away of Jim, he was greatly missed by everyone. Nobody could accept his death and their grief was such that they continued to act like nothing had changed. For instance “mother still made his empty bed” and the persona continues to tend to his garden. |
| **RELEVANCE** | **Social event**- The relevance of this message in our society is that a similar situation is witnessed in our culture. As portrayed in Thaman’s poem, feasting is also becoming an important aspect of the funeral rituals in our societies whereby a special day is often set aside just for the post burial feast. During such events, many exquisite dishes are prepared and this sad event changes into a social occasion. It is noticed that many people just attend funerals to catch up with friends or share stories over a bowl of yaqona. | **Reality**- Sometimes the regret of losing someone special can remain for one’s entire life. There are many things that remind us of our loss, for instance a vacant chair, books collecting dust on the shelf and an empty bed remind us of our loss every day. Only time can heal this tremendous feeling of sorrow and all of us have to endure this pain one day or the other therefore we must prepare ourselves and accept death as a necessary part of life. |
| **STYLES USED TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE** | Thaman in her poem “Grand mama’s Funeral” uses **emotive vocabulary** in order to convey her message of social event. For instance through the use of words such as “enslaved”, “strangled” and “agony”, Thaman is able to create an emotional response among the readers which helps them better relate the message to their own lives. This feature also gives the poem an emotive tone and helps readers understand the grief and feelings of the persona.  Another feature used by Thaman in her poem is **imagery** which conveys the theme of jealousy. For instance, the lines “pieces of white and red cloth emerge from hanging wreaths of marigold and hibiscus ready to be stripped from their origins by greedy relatives who watch all night long” clearly paints a picture in our mind of the atmosphere at grand mama’s funeral and reveals the real intention of the relatives for attending the funeral. | Angela in her poem “grief” uses **figures of speech** such as alliteration which helps in depicting the theme of separation. For example “Mother stood and stared” reveals the depth of the mother’s grief and her inability to come in terms with the death of her beloved son. Through this feature Angela is able to highlight the cruelty of death and how it separates families.  Angela also uses **personal pronouns** and **simple vocabulary** to portray her message of grief. For instance, Angela uses “I” five times and “our” four ties in her poem to help readers relate this message to their own experience. It also shows that Angela’s poem is about ordinary people who have simple emotions and also assist in creating a link with the readers. |
| **FEELINGS EXPRESSED IN THE POEM** | In this poem Thaman arouses a feeling of **sadness and sympathy** amongst the readers through the persona who is greatly devastated by the loss of her grandmother and is unable to see others turning her beloved grandmother’s funeral into a social event. The lines “in an agonizing cry I call grand mama’s name” reveals the state of the personas mind after her grand mamas death and the love she had towards her. Through this line, Thaman is able to create an emotional response among all her readers and is also able to clearly portray the messages that she is trying to relay through this poem | The main feeling expressed in Angela’s poem is **grief and sorrow** as depicted by the title. This feeling is portrayed through Jim’s relatives and loved ones who grief for him long after his death and are unable to accept their loss. For instance the lines “mother stood and stared and still makes his empty bed” reveals the depth of the mothers grief towards the death of her son and also touches the hearts of the readers as they relate it to their own experiences of losing a loved one |
| **WRITERS VIEW ABOUT THE SOCIETY** | Through this poem, Thaman depicts her society as home to selfish people who are greedy and are concerned more about their personal gain in every situation. Their culture and traditional significance of events such as funerals is dying out and it has changed to social occasions whereby people attend events for the fun of it and to meet up with friends and family thus changing a sad or solemn occasion into one of much hype and hysteria. This aspect of Thaman’s society is portrayed in the lines “freshly dug earth ovens gaping among strangled fowls and enslaved pigs surrounded by mounting heaps of taro transported their by grand mama’s countless relatives” which depicts the change that is taking place in people’s views towards such traditional events. | Angela portrays her society as home to ordinary people who experience ordinary emotions of life such as grief. They go through all circumstances in life such as death and are faced with the terrible grief of losing a loved one an accepting it as a necessary part of life. She depicts the inability of people to face reality in our societies and the pain of coming in terms with such conditions. Angela reveals this aspect of her society through the lines “mother stood and stared and still makes his empty bed” and “I feed our chickens here he once stood and weed his garden where I think he would” which depicts the different approaches of people in coping up with inevitable situations such as death. |
| **CHARACTERS** | The main character or persona of Thaman’s poem is a small girl who is greatly grieved by the loss of a grandmamma and devastated at the irrational attitude of her relatives towards her grand mama’s funeral. She feels as if she does not belong there and gives “an agonizing cry” when she cannot take in the grief and sorrow any more. | The persona of Angela’s poem seems to be a close relative or sibling of Jim who had passed away a while ago. The persona really misses his brother and s unable to come in terms with his death. This is revealed in the lines, and “I feed our chickens here he once stood and weed his garden where I think he would”. Through this we learn that the persona really loved his brother and is really saddened at his loss. |

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|  | **TITLE: FARMHAND**  **POET: JAMES BAXTER** | **TITLE: THE HERMIT**  **POET: JAMES BAXTER** |
| **THEMES/MESSAGES** | Baxter’s main theme in his poem “Farmhand” is **loneliness** whereby the persona is extremely lonely as he does not have anyone to share his days with. He seeks the company of other youths at the dance but doesn’t quiet blend in. he feels rejected by others and longs for a partner but it seems that the girls aren’t interested in him and All he could do was watch “the girls drifting like flowers”. He could not muster enough courage to ask anyone out as he is always reminded of an old wound that was possibly caused by being rejected by a girl.  Another major theme reveled by Baxter is **hopes and dreams**. Like everyone else, the persona also has some dreams that he hopes will come true for instance through the lines “girls drifting like flowers” reveals that the persona yearns for a partner and girls who fuss over him but it seems that this dream would not be realized as the persona is either too scared to ask someone out or is hesitant as it reminds him of an old wound probably inflicted due to being rejected by a girl. | Similarly in the poem “the Hermit”, Baxter’s theme is **courage**. In the poem, it is seen that although the persona is old and sickly, and has “little enough to live for”, he does not give up and wait for death to claim him. He goes on doing all the daily chores and unlike most people, he continues to enjoy the little pleasures that life has to offer, and he even “smiles” when children throw pebbles on his roof.  Another theme depicted by Baxter is **loneliness**. As the title suggests, the persona lives all by himself without contact from his family members. They do not seem to care about him. To survive and to keep from being overwhelmed by depression, he keeps himself busy collecting food, planting food, doing casual work for others, and keeping his compound clean. |
| **RELEVANCE** | **Loneliness**- This message is relevant to our society as in a lifetime everyone experiences loneliness. There is always a point in time where a person will feel rejected by others thus isolate himself from the world but loneliness is a common part of life and unless we do something about it, we will remain lonely and alone. Usually lonely people tend to have a low self-esteem and avoid socializing with others as they fear rejection however sometimes we just have to take the chance and overcome this fear in order to fully enjoy what our life has to offer. | **Courage**- This message is related to our society, as sometimes it is noticed that people get tired of their lives and just lose hope of living. They often have a grim attitude towards life and just wish it would come to an end. There are even some young people who attempt to end their lives just because they failed to achieve what they desired however as depicted in this poem, one should never give up because we do not know what path our life will take in future. We must make the most of our precious lives and treasure every moment so that we do not have any regrets when our lives approach an end. |
| **STYLES USED TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE** | Baxter uses a **narrative style** of writing to depict the message of loneliness whereby somebody seems to be telling the story of the persona and his problems. This is revealed in the lines “you will see him light a cigarette” which gives us the idea that a bystander who is sympathetic towards the persona, is trying to tell us about the strengths, weaknesses and misfortunes of the persona. Through the use of this feature, Baxter is able arose sympathy for the persona and give us a fair insight of his life.  Baxter also uses **figures of speech** to portray the message of hopes and dreams. For instance the simile “girls drifting like flowers” reveals that the persona yearns for a partner and girls who fuss over him but it seems that this dream would not be realized. Through this device, Baxter creates an emotive plea among the readers as well as paints a vivid picture in readers’ minds about the persona’s state of mind and his surroundings. | Baxter uses **emotive phrases** to portray the message of loneliness. For instance through the use of phrases such as “lives alone” and “raw cold”, Baxter creates an emotional response among the readers which helps them better relate with the persona and his situation. In addition through the use of emotive vocabulary, Baxter also creates a sympathetic tone to effectively describe the plight of the persona.  Baxter also employs **imagery** in his poem to convey the message of courage whereby the persona is not deterred by his old age and continues with his everyday life. This feature is used in the line “body shaken like a burnt out husk” which creates a vivid image of the persona in the minds of the readers and helps us visualize the life of the persona. |
| **FEELINGS EXPRESSED IN THE POEM** | In Baxter’s poem, the main emotion expressed is **sympathy** towards the persona whereby he does not seem to fit in with the ordinary folk of his age and is unable to win the heart of any girl though he longs for a partner. The persona like any other person has his own dreams however it seems that these won’t be realized due to his line of work. For instance the lines “girls drifting like flowers” reveals that the persona yearns for a partner and girls who fuss over him but it seems that these dreams are not meant to come true thus it arouses a feeling of sympathy and sadness amongst the readers. | Similarly, in his poem “The Hermit”, Baxter again arouses a feeling of **sympathy** towards the persona whereby he lives all alone cowering under his old age and struggling to meet his daily needs. He does not have the support of his children, and “has little enough to live for”. However despite his sympathetic plight, the persona does not lose hope and continues with his daily lives taking in all the pleasures it has to offer. This situation creates an emotion of both sympathy and happiness amongst the readers as unlike most people, the persona is strong willed and has made the most of his life that death appears to him as just a “wave” or “cold March gales” which will soon take him. |
| **WRITERS VIEW ABOUT THE SOCIETY** | Baxter in this poem views the society as harsh and cold towards people who somehow do not seem to fit in. this is revealed through the girls at the dance whereby they do not give any attention to the persona as the does not possess the qualities they want in their partners. They expect them to be handsome and rich and simply ignore people like the persona. It is seen in the poem that the persona longs for a partner but is afraid of getting rejected thus pretends to be unaffected by the ignorance. This is revealed in the lines “but always his eyes turn to the dance floor and the girls drifting like flowers”. Through this poem Baxter also expresses the view that every person has some positive qualities for instance the persona was an excellent farmer and best when it came to his farming tools, which needs to be appreciated by all. | Similarly in the poem “The Hermit”, Baxter’s portrays the society as ignorant to the needs of old people. In the poem, the persona leaves all alone neglected by his children and with little enough to live for. His death is approaching very soon however this does not make him lose hope or give up. He continues with his daily chores and works hard to meet his needs. He does not have the support of anyone and is left alone to fend for himself but still he remains happy and even smiles “when the kids throw pebbles at his roof”. Through this poem, Baxter also portrays the society as weak who easily get tired of their lives and wait for it to end unlike the persona who strives to make the most of his remaining days. |
| **CHARACTERS** | In Baxter’s poem the main character is a farmhand who is very lonely and longs for a partner. He is excellent at his work however is hesitant to asking a girl out as he fears rejection and remembers an old wound probably infected on him by a girl. At the dance he pretends to be uninterested in the girls but every time “his eyes turn to the dance floor and the girls drifting like flowers”. He wishes he had someone to company him and share his days with but it seems that these dreams will never be realized. | The persona in this poem is an old man who lies all by himself in an old hut and does odd jobs to meet his daily needs. He has little enough to live for and does not have the support of his children. However he is a very courageous person and does not give in to his sympathetic plight but treasures all moment of his life and takes in all pleasures that it has to offer. He even smiles “when children throw pebbles on his roof” and prays to god every night in thanks. |