

Imaginative Narrative- Year 10-12

The wind howled around my body, claws digging icy knives into pinpricks of my clothes. My footprints veered behind me, uneven where the wind had blown me off track and I had dragged myself, muscles straining, sinews groaning back to my intended path. The barn loomed ahead, stark against the white swirl of the snow. I heaved the door open, slamming it against the horizontal sleet. The wind continued to shriek, dull, insulated yet relentless.

My horse Scott, stood in one of the stalls, eyeing us with interest. His coat was flecked with grey and my mind immediately flashed back to when he was glossy and fat, as black as the coal mine my father had saved him from. The wind rose in intensity, until the abrupt slam of the door cut it short and my father entered, moving towards the peg where Scott's dusty headstall hung. His movements were irregular, jerky, troubled, so unlike his confident gait I attempted to emulate. The shrieking pitch of the wind rose up once more, berating the inside of the barn in its lustful menace. This time it did not cease. A squat man entered, eyes rolling greedily above a red, blotchy rose and unkempt clothing. I did not like him and neither it seemed, did Scott. His ears were pressed against his head wearily as the squat man circled him, like a carrion bird assessing a carcass.

A flash of coins passed between my father and the men, I wondered briefly what his purpose was. My mind searched for a possibility, but to no avail. My father fastened the halter with trembling hands, as the squat man took the leadrope, wrenching Scott towards the open door. A rusty truck was visible through the slanting snow, its worn grate down, leading to a dark, gloomy hell. My heart stopped as I realised what was happening. Bile rose in my throat, bold pumping in my ears, nails digging painfully into numb palms. Betrayal seeped through my body like poison.

My feet were moving, striving against the gale that sought to trip me, mouth gaped opening an inaudible protest, screaming harshly at the elements. My brother caught me mid leap, clasping his arm around my mouth, stifling my cries as bitter tears streamed down my face, biting into stained skin. I could do nothing, nothing as the squat man tugged on the leadrope. Scott's head jerking backwards,

Engaging beginning, putting the reader straight into the action of the story

Use of specific, more descriptive verbs to create an image of the action for the reader eg. *dragged*, *loomed*, *heaved*

Insights into the past help to subtly, yet deliberately develop character and plot

Figurative language creates imagery adding to the dramatic mood and atmosphere

The scene is described in detail using adjectives which contribute to an overall sense of foreboding eg. *'rusty'* *'gloomy'* *'dark'*

Show and not tell; as the narrator makes a realisation, so too does the reader, creating a sense of empathy with the character

The anonymity of the *'squat man'* further positions us to see him as the antagonist

A sense of the protagonist's lack of control is created by words such as *'inaudible'* and *'immobilised'* creating a sense of desperation

eyes white and rolling as his hind legs searched for sure footing in the slushy ground. I was immobilised, disbelief coursing through my mind, as my father took Scott from him, his quivering body calming under his hand, his eyes heartbreakingly trusting as he followed my father up the ramp. The door resounded shut with a horrific finality and the truck lurched away, kicking up gravel as it sped around the bend.

I hated them. I hated them all. This was not a house, it was a shell. I wanted to yell at them. Hurt them. Make them bring Scott back. I knew they wouldn't listen. I threw off my brothers now limp grasp, dragging myself over to the chicken shed against its wind piercing embrace. And there they were. Fat and shining and gloating. Crimson combs dangling against their black glossy necks like drops of blood. Anger clouded my mind, coursed through my veins, strengthened my limbs as I grasped the axe I had collected from the outside wood pile. I took the first swing, chopping wildly at our livelihood, my mother's fattened pride.

Their terrified squawks mingled with the swirling, blood spattered feathers, mutilated corpses draining onto the musty straw. I could only see Scott's face. His blind obedience. My blade rested on the last hens neck as the door swung open, my parents faces drained by shock. The chicken gurgled, blood leaking from its oozing gash, its ultimate sacrifice. I looked down into the hen's glazed expression. The same loss, tiredness, surrender. Worry etched into papery lines. Blood stained my clothing, clogged my nostrils, ran in rivulets down my hands. The wind died down to an expectant silence.

Short sentences and repetition emphasise the narrator's emotional state

The writer shifts our attention, deliberately directing it towards the hens to create a focus for what happens next

Sensory imagery paints a picture of the macabre scene

The wind is used as a symbol throughout, mirroring the mood and now signals an open-ended conclusion

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