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Summer Reading Assignment for INTD100: Coffee and Black Holes

August 29th, 2020

1. *This essay is in a narrative style, and is broken into several parts. Summarize part I in one paragraph, using 120 words or fewer. Note: The purpose of this exercise is to complete the summary in no more than a certain number of words. What key moments stand out in your mind? What is the central realization of the author at the end of the section?*

This essay narrates an African American author's lifestyle who lived in Harlem in the mid-20th Century who faced many frustrating situations and racism. Begins by describing his relationship with his father who died which was unusual. Next, describes the author's relationship with a white teacher and his family, which she offered to educate him. Later, he moves to New Jersey where he meets segregation face to face. He becomes infuriated as he experiences Jim Crow for the first time. He attempted to dine at a restaurant where he gets triggered with anger and picks a fight. Lastly, he confesses his hatred of his own heart as he almost committed murder and must be realised.

2. *Repeat exercise 1, but instead use only twenty words. What happens in part I of the essay?*

The essay demonstrates the author's hardships and injustice in the mid-20th Century Harlem and his personal life in New Jersey.

3. *Consider part III. Construct a tract of writing that a) defines and explains the poison metaphor the author describes at the funeral of his father, b) identifies the author's "cure" or cures for the poison, and c) provides several pieces of supporting evidence for the identification of the author's cure.*

A year before his father's passing the author had been working in New Jersey where he faced Jim Crow and was discriminated against nonetheless, also while growing up with father in the past. The author created an image of how his father was severely cruel and bitter. The author provides a metaphor of poison for the hatred and bitterness of discrimination, while the preachers eulogy was forgiving his fathers and decribing him very differently then the author had in his mind. The author began to realize that the reason parents were being so harsh was to prepare us for the horrible world they have to live in because they were discriminated against which is the "poison". The author's antidote for the poison isn't shown but more shows what's not the antidote. Many include: ""avenues, side streets, billiard halls, hospitals, and even the playgrounds of Harlem - not to mention the houses of correction, jail houses, and the morgue -

testified to the potency of the poison while remaining silent as to the efficacy of whatever antidote, irresistibly raising the question as to whether or not such an antidote existed ...” The biggest struggle is setting up one's heart and how you decided to control the matter, that was said at the end of part I. In conclusion to part III he explains that discrimination can't be beat and everyone must fight against it in their own manner. The best medicine to treat his own poison is to write which his white teacher inspired the African American author to do so.

4. *Consider the final part of the essay, when the author describes the fight in the Hotel Braddock. Write a tract of between 200-400 words on the author's treatment of evidence and facts. What does the author have to say about the importance of facts about the fight to the people in that neighborhood? Notice the author's writing takes on the tone of a reporter regarding the ensuing riot. What facts stand out regarding the outcome?*

In the final part of the essay, the author desperately celebrates his birthday with a friend from Manhattan after his father's funeral. In the lobby of Hotel Braddock a Negro soldier got in a fight with a White police officer over a Negro woman. There was a rumor to have been said on the street that the soldier was shot in the back but it wasn't true. The author states, “the soldier had not been shot in the back, and was not dead, and the girl seems to have been as dubious a symbol of womanhood as her white counterpart in Georgia usually is, but no one was interested in the facts.” The soldier getting shot lit a fire inside Harlem enough to destroy not ghetto lines but to businesses that gave them white power. The author takes on the tone that, nobody cared for the truth nor the facts; they just wanted an excuse to start riots towards white-owned businesses. The author provides verifiable details of what happened in the situation but rioters began mobbing in geographical detail. “bars, stores, pawnshops, restaurants, even little luncheonettes had been smashed open and entered and looted —looted, it might be added, with more haste than efficiency.” In the end the author believes that there was no reason for the riot to have started but instead says “to smash something is the ghetto's chronic need.”