Mr. John

“Fear” – Guy De Maupassant

Reflection Questions

1. What about the experience the “dark-visaged man” describes do you think made it worse than the all of the other “most terrible perils” (even those where he faced the possibility of death) he’s experienced?

Because the experience of the “dark-visaged man” is unnatural and cannot be explained by nature science. What’s more, in my own opinion, I think that experience others’ death can be more painful than experience my own.

1. Can you relate to the characters’ feelings of fear? What is the most scared you’ve ever felt

Yes. I think he is fearful to the unnatural thing that can not be explained naturally and others still tell him this is common phenomenon, producing a feeling that everyone do not believe in him and is only making a trick on him. For example, the drum can be explained according to others, however, the volume of the sound is not matched, creating a fearful atmosphere.

The most scared thing I’ve felt is when I was in primary school, I was completely be scared by a haunted house in an amusement park.

1. What is the perfect word to describe the mood established by the imagery at the start of the story? Why? (Refer to the words from the lists provided in class, or search online.) (Aside from writing a single word, feel free to also include attempts to summarize how the opening makes you feel.)

“Behind us the dazzling white water, stirred by the rapid progress of the heavy bark and beaten by the propeller, foamed, seemed to writhe, gave off so much brilliancy that one could have called it boiling moonlight” create a gloomy, horrible, scary mood at the start and this helps to foreshadowing the story that the “dark-visaged man” told.

1. What is an example of direct characterization in this story? What is an example of indirect characterization (and what does it suggest about the character)?

“An old man with white hair, wild eyes, and a loaded gun in his hands, stood waiting for us in the middle of the kitchen, while two stalwart youths, armed with axes, guarded the door.” Is an example of direct characterization and it suggests that the gamekeeper is wild and fierce.

“The commandant laughed and answered: "Bah! I assure you that I was afraid."” Is an example of indirect characterization because it describes the commandant’s spoken language and suggest that he is barbarian and domineering.

1. Is this story’s view of the world materialist or supernatural? Why?

The story’s view of the world is supernatural because the dead people can still be alive and to influence living people’s action and the voice of the drum can reflect the death of people, which cannot be explained in science.

1. What’s ironic in this story? Why?

The reaction of the commandant is ironic. He thought that he knew much about fear but actually he knew nothing because he only experienced close to death but he has never experienced the scary unnatural and friends’ death.

1. Do you think this story is likely an example of the type of writing called “literary fiction”/ “high literature”? Why or why not?

I think that it is a literary fiction because it is some kind of supernatural with all these events happening. Also, it contains literary parts that is expressed by formal literature and have a lot of descriptions.

1. Choose a phrase from the story that stands out as vivid or odd and write it below.

I think a vivid phrase in the story is “boiling moonlight” and it makes me imagine the picture of the moon easily because boiling means the water surface with curves and the motion of the bark caused the foamed water.