

Prompt: What is the dramatic question of this story? Also, in "Birds for..." who is telling the story and when? How would you characterize/describe the narrator and what moments, in the story, have lead to your understanding of the narrator?

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As I read, the dramatic question of this story is what will the fate of these boys be. It appears that once you're in the Big Boy ward, your fate is grim. Your exact destination may be uncertain, but you won't have a good life. The story is told by a narrator adjacent to the main character Michael Christian. The time is somewhat ambiguous, but with the descriptions of the TV and the reference to James Brown, it seems as though the story could take place in the 60s or 70s. The narrator seems to be almost a side character in his own story. Far more time is spent describing the actions and desires of Michael Christian than are spent on his own feelings and emotions. The only real desire we learn about the narrator is that for Christmas he wants a battery powered train set that can fit on his bed in the ward. That's not a lot to build on, and it makes the story feel somewhat like a journal entry in which a patient describes their experiences with the people around him. His eagerness to join with Michael Christian and engage in the fun actions surrounding "The Birds" reminds me of a boy who wants to be a part of something, and so he jumps onto the jokes and stories of the people around them in an attempt to be a part of the community he's a part of.