

READING REVIEW

Reviewed by: PETIT Théo

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Type of work : short story

Title : Dog, Cat and Baby

Author : Joe R. Lansdale

Place of publication : United States

Date of publication : 1987

Publisher : No informations

Overview :

To begin, it's a horror short story.

This story takes place in a family life, we don't know exactly where but we can guess it's in a house because many rooms are quoted. This family has a dog, a cat and they recently had a baby .

The story is about how life in a family house changes when there is a new person. In this case, this is the baby. At the beginning of the story, we see the side of the house's life like what the dog sees. Before the baby comes, all is fine in his life, he is loved by his master, he has attention : "Nice dog. Good Dog", compared to the cat which is only liked by them. But when the baby comes, all is changing in the house. The dog is no longer the most loved instantly. There is less consideration for the dog and all things turn around the baby. When Dog tried to get close to Masters, they say "Get back boy. Not now". It's very difficult for the dog which was the favorite of the family compared to the cat who has never been the favorite. So the dog must find a plan to repair this unfairness. This is what he will do but you will see what kind of plan and what's the role of the cat if you read Dog, Cat and Baby !

Commentary :

First, in Dog, Cat and Baby, we don't know how the characters are named. There is no direct dialog in this story but we have access to what the dog thinks and what the masters says at some moments. The story is told by a narrator with many descriptions.

Then, when I read this story, I was thinking that there was a kind of truth at the beginning because dogs are very appreciated in a family but when a baby arrives, there is no more time for them. This story is very interesting because we are never to the way of thinking of the dog and this is what Joe R Lansdale exactly did. In Dog, Cat and Baby, the main character is the dog and the other characters are the baby, the cat and masters. The story is cut in two parts. The first, when there is a little description of the life before the arrival of the baby and after when all is changed for the dog. The second is the reaction of the dog and his plan to be the favorite again. I can't comment on the second part because it will spoil you and I don't want to. The only thing I can say about this part is that the cat has an utility and there are lots of descriptions about the actions of the dog and the cat. The sentences are small but very precise with a verb. The global atmosphere in Dog, Cat and Baby is a family atmosphere because it takes place in a family dwelling. However, we have the feeling of murder and revenge, let by the dog. Sometimes in the story, the dog is speaking to him thanks to the narrator. For example in line 14 when the dog says "When would it be now", he speaks to him. We can also say that there is no dialog in this story so it underlines that the dog thinks about his revenge alone and he is kind of alone.

To recap, last year, I read My Dead Dog, Bobby from Joe R Lansdale again. The story makes me feel weird because it's a very trashy story with the head of a dog in a bag. But with Dog, Cat and Baby, it's not the same feeling, it's more real because every family can have a dog and a baby and that's why I like this story and I will promote it to every person who likes horror stories but not so much horror and a part of reality in the story. The atmosphere is not the same like in other horror stories and this short story is very short like his name because Dog, Cat and Baby is about 2 pages long so everyone can read it. For the moment, it's my favourite horror story because we are in a different perspective of other stories because we are in the way of thinking of the dog. I have to admit that I'm not a fan of horror stories because most of the time there are many horrific details and I don't like that but this story is different because there are details but they are not told like other stories.

If I had to conclude, I will say that this short story changed my opinion of horror stories and you had to read it. In other stories, we could read again My Dead Dog, Bobby and Dog, Cat and Baby to see if the comprehension of elements has changed after reading these two books.