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12 May 2021

### "Sam Kravitz, that thief" Essay

The spaces and places in "Sam Kravitz, that thief" illustrate the narrators current views and opinions, along with weaving in some of how he felt at the time. A lot of this goes against his original view of the American dream.

The places the father lives show his standard of living, along with his social standing. At the beginning of the story, he's in Romania, where he's generally living fine, but he wants more in life. He sees America as an opportunity to "redeem himself" to his family, where people don't have to worry due to the standard of living being higher. He then realizes America at the time was generally grungy and gross, especially for poor people. It feels like the spaces within the story shift as the story progresses. As the father starts to feel better about his standing, his description of his place in life generally improves. As the father is worse off, America feels like a shiftier place than it did before. There's also an interesting contrast between how the father feels and how he describes the spaces he's in. The way he describes sleeping on the "spread [of] newspapers on the floor" and being elated at America being "a land of fun," and the amount of time his wonder lives on is interesting.

Before the father moved to America, it is described as one of the most amazing places, when he got there, he realized that it wasn't great for most people. He originally saw it as a land of fun and games for everyone, but he realizes that even though the technological progress had gone further than Romania, it didn't necessarily lead to a lesser amount of work or being treated better in general.

This is a form of the American dream most of us are familiar with, made even more hyperbolic. The idea that "the poorest ragpicker lived better than a Romanian millionaire" is almost laughable from my perspective, but they also barely had contact with the United States. After living in America for a while, he becomes cynical and very willing to take advantage of

others in order to get where he wants to be. This is very similar to Sam Kravitz, who is the one who made him come to this perspective through betrayal. It's funny, the father got a picture of him in the hat that he saw his cousin wearing before he had lost as much weight as his cousin had. They could both have done many similar things from getting to the United States to the point that they meet, Kravitz is just an older version of the father from the story.

I think that the imagery of the spaces and places in this short story is done really well and adds to the feelings presented throughout the work. The themes of distrust and betrayal are amplified by the grungy feel of the places at the low points, and that falls away well at the high points.