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Short Story Rough Draft

In life, an individual’s actions, are often predicated on emotion, or motivated by serious contemplation. This idea is also applicable to literature. Undoubtedly, the majority of characters, if not all characters, act on emotion. As Duff Brenna said, “All literature shows us the power of emotion. It is emotion, not reason, that motivates characters in literature.” Essentially, it is one’s feelings that causes a figure to act in literature. This idea is used in “Roman Fever” by Edith Wharton, and “Miss Brill” by Katherine Mansfield. Although it may show that characters act on reason in Thomas Wolfe’s story, “The Child by Tiger”, when analyzed thoroughly, it is emotion that causes their actions.

In, “Roman Fever” by Edition Wharton, the characters act on emotion. For example, on page 70, paragraph 89, Mrs. Slade says, “’You do understand? I’d found out - and I hated you. I knew you were in love with Delphin - and I was afraid; afraid of you, of your quiet ways, your sweetness…your…well, I wanted you out of the way, that’s all. Just for a few weeks I just till I was sure of him. So in a blind fury, I wrote that letter…’” This quote states that Mrs. Slade was jealous of Ansley, and how Slade only wrote that letter to try to stop Ansley from loving Delphin. Slade acts on emotion here since she is afraid and jealous of the fact that Delphin might love Ansley over herself. This supports the claim as Slade acted on emotion, feeling jealousy towards Ansley. Furthermore, another example that supports this idea is on page 71, paragraph 104. The quote from Mrs. Slade states “’Well, girls are ferocious, sometimes, you know. Girls in love especially…’” Fundamentally, Mrs. Slade is pronouncing that females are very emotional. Both Mrs. Slade and Mrs. Ansley were jealous of each other also and envy each other. Certainly, Mrs. Slade and Mrs. Ansley are both characters that act on the emotion of envy and jealousy.

In Katherine Manfield’s story, “Miss Brill,” displays the characters in her story acting as the effect of emotion that they feel. For example, on page 98, paragraph 3, the narrator says, “For Miss Brill always looked forward for the conversation.” Miss Brill is only anticipating the conversation because she would like to eavesdrop on people. Miss Brill fancies eavesdropping since she feels lonely. Moreover another reason on why Miss Brill acts on emotion, is on page 98, paragraph 3, and according to the text, “She had become really quite the expert, she thought, at listening as though she didn’t listen, at sitting in other people’s lives just for a minute while they talked to her.” This quote would also exemplify that Miss Brill is mastering this skill of eavesdropping due to an emotion, loneliness. Loneliness causes Miss Brill to eavesdrop because she has nobody to talk to, and to pass the time, she would listen to others. Indubitably, Miss Brill is a character who acts on the emotion of loneliness in, “Miss Brill”.

Although it may show that characters act on reason in “The Child by Tiger” by Thomas Wolfe, when thoroughly analyzed, the characters actually act on emotion and it is their feelings that motivate them. On page 30, paragraph 48, Randy says, “’It’s-it’s Dick!’ And in a moment, ‘They say he’s killed four people.’” Despite it may seem that Dick Prosser is acting on reason when he goes on a rampage, as it appears that Prosser is acting this way because of the affair that he’s gotten into and the racism that he deals with. However, Prosser goes on a killing rampage due to his emotions. Prosser did the killings because he had felt anger, stress and frustration, and wanted to release his anger and emotions. Even though some characters in literature are motivated by reason, most of them, including Prosser in, “The Child by Tiger”, who carries out their actions through the emotion that they feel.

Absolutely, most, if not all characters in literature have an emotion that propels them to do an action. Specifically, love, jealousy, and envy motivates Slade and Ansley in Wharton’s story. Then, in, “The Child by Tiger”, even though it may look like the characters act on reason, when thoroughly analyzed, it boils down to all characters having an emotional motivation. Prosser goes on a killing spree because of his anger and stress. Equally important, Miss Brill acts on loneliness throughout the story. Ideally, the actions and decisions of people should be acted on reason than emotion, but this idea is somewhat unrealistic. Overall, authors portray characters who act because of their emotions that they feel.