

Feminist Writings
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The Fly- Part 2

Hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled Feminist Writing, we were looking at Katherine Mansfield short story The Fly, we have already had one lecture on this story and we will just continue with the text today, but as I may have mentioned in the first lecture this is a story about you know after the first world war, so it is important to have that background in the mind. This is a story written in the after month of the war so the you know emotions, the embodiments, the identities, the setting of the story is essentially a post war setting, a post war won.

And we have seen already in the beginning of the story we have to contrast a model masculinity pitted against each other, so we have old Woodfield who is essentially a senile person who's descriptions, the way he is described this you know it would suggest that he is essentially infantilized with time, infantilized by members of family, and in contrast to that we have the boss who's name would never we would never know. He is just called the boss in the story and the suggestion that we, uh that is given to the story by the writer is that the boss is very much, despite being five years older than Woodfield the boss is very much you know uh in control of his life, you know he is stout, rosy, still at the helm, so he is at helm of things, he is at control of things.

That's something which is indicated over and over again in the story. And we have seen how that uh office of the boss becomes an extended embodiment of his masculinity, in a sense that he has acquired new furnisher, he has acquired new book case, you know new electric heating, uh new carpet, and since in a very imperious fashion reading the financial times which is essentially a business newspaper.

And little objects in his office become very important symbolically, in terms of communicating the masculinity of the boss, in terms of communicating the gendered location, the gendered privilege that the boss appears to enjoy in the story. So he is reading the business news and financial times, he is flipping it open, the newspaper with the paper knife. He has all these new uh you know new amenities, new a gadget with which he is surrounded.

But the point with which we stopped in the last lecture is where that is an indication of an object which doesn't quite fit in with the rest of the objects in the story, and that object is a photograph of a boy. And we are told that photograph is almost six years old, its over six years old actually and it is about a boy, young man in grave looking uniform. Uh so uniform of a soldier presumably, and the photograph is taken in the spectral photographers park, and the word spectral is important because it has, obviously it means shadowy but there is a sense of death about spectrally, about something spectral, it is a shadowy quality of death.

And that death quality, death like quality is something which creeps into the story and which becomes a bit of an incompatible entity along with all the architecture of new ness that the boss has surrounded himself with.

So uh we stopped at that point and uh in the last lecture we saw, we observed how this little object which is just mentioned in passing, almost in passing uh and is an object which the boss doesn't really show off, which the boss doesn't really draw attention of Woodifield to is perhaps an important object, is perhaps suggestive of something, may be the boss is just trying to conceal something with that object, may be it has a history, may be it has a past and that would be unfolded as we move on in this story.

Now coming back to Woodifield we see how uh the entire gendered identity is almost reversed in the story, because Woodifield is allowed to come to city by his wife and doctors, and of course when you allow someone something uh the obvious assumption is you have the agency to permit that person to do something, and the person who is being allowed doesn't quite have the agency,

so he or she would require your permission, would require approval from you in terms of being allowed to do something.

And it is also described that how he is brushed, how he is dressed up by his wife and daughters in a very infantilized way, so he is all essentially like an old man who is also a baby, and that is interesting because what that tells essentially that he is not really a masculine person. So his masculinity is a vigor as a (())(4:34) person is being questioned, it being compromised, so he has what we call crises in embodiment, so he doesn't quite have the agency, he doesn't quite have the mobility of the other people around him.

And you know it would appear in the story that the women in the story appear to have more mobility than the men, and the men over here is obviously very old men as we will see. So in a very interesting sense the stereotypical assumptions about gender and mobility and agency are you know interestingly problematized in this story.

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'Yes, it's comfortable enough,' agreed the boss, and he flipped the Financial Times with a paper-knife. As a matter of fact he was proud of his room; he liked to have it admired, especially by old Woodifield. It gave him a feeling of deep, solid satisfaction to be planted there in the midst of it in full view of that frail old figure in the muffler.

'I've had it done up lately,' he explained, as he had explained for the past how many weeks.

'New carpet,' and he pointed to the bright red carpet with a pattern of large white rings. 'New furniture,' and he nodded towards the massive bookcase and the table with legs like twisted treacle. 'Electric heating!' He waved almost exultantly towards the five transparent, pearly sausages glowing so softly in the tilted copper pan.

But he did not draw old Woodifield's attention to the photograph over the table of a grave-looking boy in uniform standing in one of those spectral photographers' parks with photographers' storm-clouds behind him. It was not new. It had been there for over six years.

'There was something I wanted to tell you,' said old Woodifield, and his eyes grew dim remembering. 'Now what was it? I had it in my mind when I started out this morning.' His hands began to tremble, and patches of red showed above his beard.

Poor old chap, he's on his last pins, thought the boss. And, feeling kindly, he winked old man, and said jokingly,



Okay so saw how in the last section there is an indication that there should be an scream that the photographer, the photograph of the boy in the uniform it was not named, it had been there for over six years. So it is incompatible essentially with the new objects around the boss, he is so planted in the middle of all these new architecture, new furniture, new amenities, in his office but

at the same time there is this old photograph of the boy in a very grave looking uniform and again, grave looking has commutations of death.

And then we have Woodifield telling the boss that there was something I wanted to tell you, said Woodifield, and his eyes grew dim remembering, 'now what was it, I had it in my mind when I started out this morning.' His hands began to tremble, and patches of red showed about his beard.

So obviously Woodifield is described as a very pathetic figure, he is someone that we are supposed to pity essentially, so you know he is struggling to remember something, patches of red are showing under his beard, which means it is strange for him to remember something, so he has reached that level, he has reached that degree of senility, that degree of decadence where the very act of remember becomes a strenuous act for him, that is something where he is struggling to say, he is struggling to remember, something he had sit out in the morning to tell the boss, so patches of his hand become to tremble, and patches of red show up above his beard, so you know signs of senility clearly.

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Poor old chap, he's on his last pins, thought the boss. And, feeling kindly, he winked at the old man, and said jokingly,

'I tell you what. I've got a little drop of something here that'll do you good before you go out into the cold again. It's beautiful stuff. It wouldn't hurt a child.' He took a key off his watch-chain, unlocked a cupboard below his desk, and drew forth a dark, squat bottle. 'That's the medicine,' said he. 'And the man from whom I got it told me on the strict Q.T. it came from the cellars at Windsor Castle.'



Poor chap, he is on his last pins, thought the boss. And feeling kindly, he winked at the old man and said jokingly. So again look at the condescending quality of the boss, he is being very patronizing, and he feels very superior compared to Woodifield, and we saw already before that how sitting there in front of Woodifield to get him sense of solid satisfaction, and that

satisfaction comes from our knowledge of superiority, that he feels superior to Woodifield, he would feel superior to the person opposite you who is quite evidently inferior in terms of health, in terms of social standing, in terms of agency, in terms of mobility, so he is senile old man, loved by his wife and daughters, accomplices on Tuesdays, he is dressed up by his wife and daughter, he is brushed up by his wife and daughters, so he is essentially an immobile person, he is not someone who has lot of mobility or agency.

Compared to which the boss, obviously appears to enjoy a lot of privileges, appears to enjoy a lot of agency, so he has a luxury to be patronizing, he has luxury to be kind, to be generous to Woodifield, because that would consolidate his knowledge, his sense of superiority.

So this is what he things, Poor old chap, he is on his last pins, he is on his last legs of life, told is boss. Feeling kindly he winked at the old man and said jokingly, 'I tell you what, I've got a little drop of something here that'll do you good, before you go out in the cold again. It's a beautiful stuff and it wouldn't hurt a child, 'He took a key of his watch-chain, unlocked the cupboard below his desk, and drew forth a dark, squat bottle. 'That's the medicine,' Said he. 'And the man from whom I got it told me on a strict Q.T. it came from the cellars at Windsor Castle.'

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Old Woodifield's mouth felt open at the sight. He couldn't have looked more surprised if the boss had produced a rabbit. Now this little section is interesting because the boss over here feels

kindly towards Woodifield, and that kindness comes from the sense of superiority, comes from the sense of positions of privilege, from which Woodifield looks way inferior, looks quite pathetic in quality.

And so the boss says, that I will give you something which would help you and he brings out a bottle of whisky, and this again becomes a metaphor for masculinity, it is very male drink, traditionally, typically, and then he goes on to show her off, he goes on to tell people that you know, tell Woodifield that this is very special whisky, the person he got it from told him in strict confidence that it came from Windsor Castle which is obviously a market of privilege, a market of loyalty, a market of aristocracy essentially.

So that makes the drink even more priceless in quality, even more valuable in quality, that becomes again uh extension of bosses masculinity, extension of bosses masculine privilege. And if you look at Woodifield's reaction to it, old Woodifield mouth fell open at the sight. He couldn't have looked more surprised if the boss has produced rabbit. Now this is interesting because the whole act of pulling out a rabbit out of the hat is a very traditional magician's trick.

So to Woodifield sitting across the table from the boss uh that side of the bottle whisky being brought out from the cupboard is Tanta mole to magic, is Tanta mole to something which he rarely sees. So how do you define magic? We define magic as something which is almost unnatural, which doesn't appear naturally, so to Woodifield this act of the boss to bring out bottle of whisky is almost an act of magic. So he couldn't have looked more surprised if the boss had produced a rabbit.

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'It's whisky, ain't it?' he piped feebly.

The boss turned the bottle and lovingly showed him the label. Whisky it was.

'D'you know,' said he, peering up at the boss wonderingly, 'they won't let me touch it at home.' And he looked as though he was going to cry.

'Ah, that's where we know a bit more than the ladies,' cried the boss, swooping across for two tumblers that stood on the table with the water-bottle, and pouring a generous finger into each. 'Drink it down. It'll do you good. And don't put any water with it. It's sacrilege to tamper with stuff like this. Ah!' He tossed off his, phlled out his handkerchief, hastily wiped his moustaches, and cocked an eye at old Woodifield, who was rolling his in his chaps.

The old man swallowed, was silent a moment, and then said faintly, 'It's nutty!'

But it warmed him; it crept into his chill old brain he remembered.



Uh, its whisky, aint it? He piped feebly. The boss turned the bottle and loving showed him the label Whisky it was. So again he is almost, completely blown away, he is flabbergasted you know in a very positive sense, he is amazed at the sight and he says, its whisky, ain't it he piped feebly. So he is feeble, he is old, he is weak, he is pathetic, he is trembling, uh and he is growing red in the beard, etc. so all these are signs of senility, all these are the signs of weakness, feebleness, so feeble quality, so he piped feebly.

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Again this is the continuation, the pathetic quality of Woodifield, where he says quite clearly that you know back in the home they wouldn't let me touch it, they wouldn't let me touch alcohol, and he said it in a way as if he is going to cry, as if he is going to break down in tears.

And this obviously is an indication of his masculinity crises. The fact that he is not really a man in control anymore, he is not really a decision maker anymore, he is not really someone who calls the shots anymore, so all these traditional markers of masculinity, the stereotypical markers of masculinity he doesn't have, right? So, and the bosses reaction is interesting, it is obviously suggestive of the kind of person he is at least at this point of time.

So when the boss here said that the people and the girls and the women in Woodifield's house, home would not let him touch alcohol, would not let him touch whisky, this is what he says, 'Ah that's where we know a bit more than the ladies., cried the boss, swooping across the two tumblers that stood on the table with the water-bottles, and poring a generous finger into each.

So again this is very stereotypically very arrogant masculinity, a masculinity which is situated you know in arrogant privilege, or atleast the assumption of privilege, the assumption of superiority, and you know this remark that ladies wont know about alcohol, because we know that it has medicinal purpose, thus medicine, so it is a man talk. It is like man is painting very very blunt assumption of superiority, very blunt assumption of privilege, that the boss is exhibiting over here.

So it is interesting because when I, we started discussing this story, I introduced this story as a feminist attire, as a attire, critique as a feminist critique, there was certain kind of masculinity, but what we see over here is boss is allowed to grow, to appear as a masculine, dominant masculine character, as a privileged masculine character, and that grow, and that consolidation of privilege, is important because what will happen later in the story is that privilege should be cut down, that privilege should be essentially castrated, essentially critiqued in a very very strong feminist voice.

But at this moment we see the boss, we hear the boss saying very condescending patronizing offensive remarks about women, in a sense that we know more than the ladies, and this is whisky and it's a male's drink and how would the ladies know, and this is medicinal purpose and then he pores a generous finger into each, a generous peg into each tumbler that he had brought out.

'Drink down, it will do you good and don't put on any water with it. Its sacrilege to tamper with stuff like this. Ah!' He tossed of his, pulled out his handkerchief, hastily wiped his moustaches, and cocked an eye at old Woodifield who was rolling his in his chaps.

So the entire activity, the entire vigor the boss exhibits over here in terms of drinking down this little peg of whisky very very quickly, very briskly, he tossed off his, and then he pulled down his handkerchief, and wiped his moustaches, again a marker of masculinity in a very stereotypical way.

So he appears at this point as a successful boss, as a successful person in this office drinking whisky, you know surrounded by new furniture, surrounded by new amenities, and obviously very very imperious in his language, very imperious in his embodiment uh as of now. So Woodifield in contrast was still rolling in his chaps, so struggling to drink it down, but his boss gulped it down in one go.

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'That was it,' he said, heaving himself out of his chair.

'I thought you'd like to know. The girls were in Belgium last week having a look at poor Reggie's grave, and they happened to come across your boy's. They're quite near each other, it seems.'



Now this is sort of a turning point in the story, and this is why Woodifield remembers, what he said out to tell the boss when he sat in the morning. That was it, he said, heaving himself out of the chair. "I thought you'd like to know, the girls were in Belgium last week having a look at

poor Reggie's grave, and they happened to come across your boy's, They're quite near each it seems'.

Now this is a first indication of the story, first clear, first direct indication of the story about dead sons. And we get to know at this point that both boss, the boss and Woodifield had lost his sons in the war and this is an image, this is information that we will give some about the girls. So presumably his wife and daughters, who went to Belgium having a look at poor Reggie's grave.

Reggie presumably is the son of Woodifield, and happen to come across your boys. So this is interesting as he talks about his own sons, Poor Reggie, so there is degree of detachment against the trauma, so he can talk about his dead son as poor Reggie, so when you say something, poor something, so you pity someone, but at the same time there is a degree of, there is flippant quality about that pittyiness.

There is superficial quality about the pity. It is not really a deep pity, it is not a deep emotional connect when you say someone is oh poor something, so it is almost, it is indicate of the fact that you have moved on from that loss, you have moved on from that sorrow, so he talks about his own son as poor Reggie, and that's interesting. And then he mentions that they happened to come across your boys, the bosses' boy who now we know, also died in the war and his grave happens to be in Belgium and right beside, in the same graveyard as where Woodifield's son grave is.

They are quite near each other, it seems, old Woodifield paused but the boss makes no reply. Only quiver in his eyelids showed that he has. This is interesting because the bosses response is non-verbal over here, so only quiver in his eye-lids which is indicative of the fact that he is heard, so he is responding to that information with a quiver in his eyelids.

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Old Woodfield paused, but the boss made no reply. Only a quiver in his eyelids showed that he heard.

'The girls were delighted with the way the place is kept,' piped the old voice. 'Beautifully looked after. Couldn't be better if they were at home. You've not been across, have yer?'

'No, no!' For various reasons the boss had not been across.

'There's miles of it,' quavered old Woodfield, 'and it's all as neat as a garden. Flowers growing on all the graves. Nice broad paths.' It was plain from his voice how much he



‘Girls were delighted with the way place is kept,’ piped the old voice. Beautifully looked after, couldn’t be better, if they were at home. You’ve not been across, have you?’ ‘No, No!’ for various reason the boss had not been across.

So again if you look at the description over here, Woodfield is saying that girls were delighted the way place is kept, it is beautifully preserved, it is beautifully maintained, and it couldn’t be better if they were home, now this as a aside to this is interesting for us to know if it had been a proper cultural of this particular story, that after the first world war, the tourism industry really boomed.

The tourism industry really shot off in terms of, uh commerce, in terms of profits, because you know what happened was essentially was not as far as trauma tourism, people would go to different countries to see their near ones, the dear ones graves. Like for instance here Woodifield’s wife and daughters had gone to Belgium, they flew presumably all the way to Belgium to take a look at their son Reggi’s grave, and like wise other people, thousands of people, millions of people actually would travel to different countries to take a look at the grave of their dear one’s who died in the war.

So the war, the First World War, the moaning after the First World War did wonders, worked wonders for the tourism industry at that point of time in a very perverse kind of investment. So uh, for various reasons the boss had not been across, we know that the boss had not been across; the boss had not been to Belgium to take a look at his sons grave. And then Woodifield goes on to describe the place.

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The pause came again. Then the old man brightened wonderfully.

'D'you know what the hotel made the girls pay for a pot of jam?' he piped. 'Ten francs

Backham: Well it is more a little bit as Canada was as big as a half an acre.



There are miles of it, quavered old Woodifield, 'and it's all as neat as garden. Flowers growing on all the graves, Nice broad paths.' It was plain from his voice how much he liked a nice broad path.

So you know he is talking about this special beauty of the place, lots of garden, the paths are very broad, you know the flowers growing on all the graves, this is very interesting image, very interesting symbol, the flowers growing on grave is an example may be read as an image of regeneration, the sacrecity of life and death.

So we have a grave under which someone is dead, and on top of which we have flowers growing, so as an image of rebirth, as an image of regeneration, a very palpable image of regeneration

visually speaking, and then of course he talks about nice broad paths. How the paths are very broad, and very nice, and very scenic in quality.

It was plain from his voice how much he liked and nice broad paths, so and this is an interesting bit, the way he describes the way the vocabulary, uh is operative over here in terms of the graveyard, it is very much touristy vocabulary it is very much the vocabulary of describing something which is beautiful and touristy. In a sense of being scenic, in a sense of being beautifully maintained, in a sense of being well preserved etc.

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'D'you know what the hotel made the girls pay for a pot of jam?' he piped. 'Ten francs! Robbery, I call it. It was a little pot, so Gertrude says, no bigger than a half-crown. And she hadn't taken more than a spoonful when they charged her ten francs. Gertrude brought the pot away with her to teach 'em a lesson. Quite right, too; it's trading on our feelings. They think because we're over there having a look round we're ready to pay anything. That's what it is.' And he turned towards the door.

'Quite right, quite right!' cried the boss, though what was quite right he hadn't the least idea. He came round by his desk, followed the shuffling footsteps to the door, and saw the old fellow out. Woodifield was gone.



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So again these are very very touristy metaphors, this is a very touristy vocabulary that Woodifield is using. And he is so complaining about the price of jam in Belgium, and he is saying that just because we are there, you know my wife and daughters were there in the hotel, and the hotel made them paid ten francs, for a pot of jam. It was a tiny pot, according to Woodifield.

And then he goes on to say Gertrude, presumably his wife, or may be one of his daughters brought back the jam pot to teach them a lesson just because we are paying for it, may as well bring it back. So again this is a very pity touristy details which are discharged, which are described over here.

So just because we are over there, and then he goes on to say quite ride, it is trading on our feelings. So this is what I mentioned, what I meant when I mentioned trauma tourism. So this is a journey to look at poor people's, the dead people's grave, the dear one's grave that are traumatic at the same time it is becoming the touristy thing at the moment, though they are over there, looking around, buying things, checking into hotels etc, it is trading on our feelings.

They think because we are over there, having a look around, we are ready to pay anything. That's what it is. And he turned towards the door. So he said that we are over there, taking a look at sons grave, it is an emotional thing but then that doesn't mean they will rip us of like that etc.

So you know that idea of being ripped off, that idea of being cheated, that idea of being overcharged for something, and these are very very petty touristy details which are normal in touristy conversations, in exchange of information about tourists, but that is fore granted over here. That is important thing.

So the entire touristy bit, the entire touristy vocabulary is in the foreground of Woodifield's description, where his real emotional connect, real emotional sense of loss, or emotions of looking at the son's grave, that never appears in the decryption.

So he talks about nice flowers, nice gardens, nice broad paths, hotels being nice, hotel being overpriced, etc, it is almost like you are coming back from little resort, little vacation and talking about it to a friend, so that is the whole idea in this particular description. And he turned towards the door.

'Quite right, quite right!' cried the boss, though what was quite right he hadn't the least idea. He came round by his desk, followed the shuffling footsteps to the door, and saw the old fellow out. Woodifield was gone.

Now the boss says, quite right, he is crying, he is saying quite right, quite right. Collaborating Woodifields, apparently collaborating Woodifields description, but that we will get to know very quickly as what was quite right, he hadn't a least idea.

Now this is important because. So far we are seeing that boss is in complete control, complete cognitive control. He is in control of his language, he is in control of what he is consuming, in the form of Whisky, he is in control of his surroundings, he is in control of his extended embodiment, in a sense of reading financial times with the paper knife, and a sense of being planted in a very privileged way with a room full of electric heating, new furniture, new carpet, so he was in complete control of his communications, complete control of his cognition, and complete control of his embodiment.

But over here, we have find that the boss just says quite right quite right, in a very echoing and imitative way without actually realizing or without actually thinking of what he is saying, so that is in complete contrast with the beginning of the story.

And this is the point of the story, where the turning happens, the entire reversal takes place. And we find that from this point of the story the boss gets more and more you know disempowered, more and more castrated, metaphorically castrated, in a sense that he loses agency, he loses his sense of privilege, he loses his sense of control over his surroundings.

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'No, no!' For various reasons the boss had not been across.

'There's miles of it,' quavered old Woodfield, 'and it's all as neat as a garden. Flowers growing on all the graves. Nice broad paths.' It was plain from his voice how much he liked a nice broad path.

The pause came again. Then the old man brightened wonderfully.

'D'you know what the hotel made the girls pay for a pot of jam?' he piped. 'Ten francs! Robbery, I call it. It was a little pot, so Gertrude says, no bigger than a half-crown. And she hadn't taken more than a spoonful when they charged her ten francs. Gertrude brought the pot away with her to teach 'em a lesson. Quite right, too; it's trading on our feelings. They think because we're over there having a look round we're ready to pay anything. That's what it is.' And he turned towards the door.

'Quite right, quite right!' cried the boss, though what was quite right he hadn't the least idea. He came round by his desk, followed the shuffling footsteps to the door, and saw the old fellow out. Woodfield was gone.

For a long moment the boss stayed, staring at nothing, while the grey-haired office messenger, watching him, dodged in and out of his cubby-hole like a dog that expects



Okay, so Woodfield was gone, for long time the boss stayed staring at nothing. So again looking at nothingness, he is completely blanked out over here, in contrast to the way the story had began where boss was in control of his surroundings.

Staring at nothing, while the grey-haired office messenger, watching him, dodged in and out of his cubby hole like a dog that expects to be taken for a run.

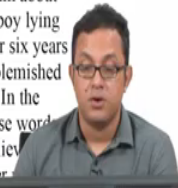
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taken for a run. Then: 'I'll see nobody for half an hour, Macey,' said the boss. 'Understand! Nobody at all.'

'Very good, sir.'

The door shut, the firm heavy steps recrossed the bright carpet, the fat body plumped down in the spring chair, and leaning forward, the boss covered his face with his hands. He wanted, he intended, he had arranged to weep....

It had been a terrible shock to him when old Woodfield sprang that remark upon him about the boy's grave. It was exactly as though the earth had opened and he had seen the boy lying there with Woodfield's girls staring down at him. For it was strange. Although over six years had passed away, the boss never thought of the boy except as lying unchanged, unblemished in his uniform, asleep for ever. "My son!" groaned the boss. But no tears came yet. In the past, in the first months and even years after the boy's death, he had only to say those words to be overcome by such grief that nothing short of a violent fit of weeping could relieve him. Time, he had declared then, he had told everybody, could make no difference. Other



Then: 'I'll see nobody for half an hour, Macey, said the boss. 'Understand! Nobody at all.' So if you look at the description of the Macey, he is described as a dog, a dog to be taken for a run. And this is interesting, it is almost like he is not human, he is not fully human, he is a very loyal dog, he is a very faithful dog, so his humanity, his identity, is marked by his loyalty, its all determined by his loyalty.

So messy becomes the messenger for the boss, and clearly boss has said I will see no body for half an hour, Macey, and said the boss Understand nobody at all. 'Very good, sir.' The door shut, the firm heavy steps recrossed the bright carpet. The fat body plumped down in the spring chair, and leaning forward the boss covered his face with his hands. He wanted, he intended, he had arranged to weep...

Now this is the bit with which we will stop the lecture today. But I will just unpack this a little bit, because what is happening over here is boss goes back to his office, he shuts his office and instructs, he doesn't want to be disturbed for half an hour, so he goes back and the fat body, the big, heavy body of the boss plumed down on the spring chair, and he leaned forwards, he leans forward in his table and he covers his face with his hands.

And then we have this really important sentence, he wanted; he intended he arranged to weep. Now this is the point of the story where it begins to get really complex, because he is arranging

to weep, he wants to weep, he intends to weep and he is designing to weep. Now what happens is, what is being suggested that the boss wants to be in complete control of his emotions, he wants to be in complete control of his emotions of loss, of his emotions of mourning, he wants to weep at will.

And the ability to weep at will is part of his masculinity, the ability to mourn at will is part of his masculinity, so he this is arrogance of boss, the hubris of the boss in a way. Hubris being false arrogance, dangerous arrogance, but he probably believes that he can weep at will if he wants to, he can arrange to weep at will if he wants to, so this entire wanting, and intending to arrange into weep becomes very very important information about bosses masculinity.

And we find from this point of the story how this masculinity, that complex of controlling emotions uh begins to be dismantled, begins to get decimated in the story in due course of time, so we stop at this point today, but just going back and rehearsing this lecture, uh the thing, the content which we covered in this lecture.

We see how the boss and Woodifield is pitted against each other in terms of two different models of masculinity, the boss is being more stout, more rosy, more strong, at least more superficially strong, and then out of that strength, out of that strength of superiority he gives Woodifield a drink of whisky, a peg of whisky, to drink and then on drink Woodifield remembers what he wanted to tell the boss, there we get to know that bosses son is dead in the war, had died in the war and now his grave is in Belgium.

He is buried in the same graveyard as Woodifield's son Reggie, and Woodifield's wife and daughter had been to Belgium recently to take a look at his son's grave, and the bosses son grave. And then the entire conversation takes place, these monologues takes place about the petty touristy details about the price of jam, about the hotel, about the nice broad paths, about the gardens, about the flowers.

And then we see, we are told that the boss had never been to Belgium, the boss has never visited the actual site of trauma, uh and then he is visibly disconcerted, he is reasonably unsettled, that that remark from Woodifield, and once he sees Woodifield out he just says quite right quite right, he is saying something blankly without even thinking about it.

He comes back to his office, he instructs his messenger Masey, who is compared to a dog, who is described as a dog in terms of absolute loyalty, absolute agencylessness, absolute faithfulness etc. but also in a sense being de-humanized. And he tells Macey that I don't want to see anyone for the half an hour, he comes back to his office, he shuts his office and then he crosses, he sits on his uh you know fancies his body in leather arm chair, covers his face, leans on the table and then we see, he wanted, he intended, he arranged to weep.

So the entire ability as I mentioned to weep at will becomes part of his masculinity package, and then you find out later as you move on to the next lecture that according to the boss, his loss is so severe, his loss is so special, his loss is so unique that other people might forget the loss, but he would always be able to remember the loss in a way that he would be able to weep at will. So very interestingly weeping, or moaning which are stereotypically female or feminized activity over here are appropriated by the male, by the dominant male, with the difference that he is man enough, he is manly enough to weep at will.

He is masculine enough to control his hysteria, to engineer his hysteria, to orchestrate his hysteria. And the ability to orchestrate his hysteria becomes a part of the masculinity package that the boss over here. So we stop at this point today and we continue with this story in the next lectures. Thank you for your attention.