

2014 - Memorable

(i) From the grandchildren's point of view, the house is like a playground to them as it is full of furniture for the children to play with, like how the "flowery rug" where they had their "weekly toe-sinking, wriggling fun". This showed that the children visited the house weekly and playing with the rug had become part of their routine. So this makes the house memorable to them as they can look forward to having an exciting time there. Also/Furthermore they find the antique furniture fascinating, describing the "puff dusk rose seats" and the details of the chair in a "in baroque curls" shape. Since these seats "regarded us in repose", it means that the children were well-looked after, which allows them to play safely. Moreover, when they get tired, it also provides them a comfortable place to rest. Therefore this house is memorable for them because not only do they get to play amongst the beautiful furniture there, they are also safe and comfortable while playing.

The food that was cooked were their **favourite dishes** and it was served in a **unique way** with "a spinning center" and "Bee hoon, and more". This suggests that there's a plentiful amount of delicious food for their regular reunion lunch and the spinning center that makes the dinner feel like it is a special occasion. Furthermore the food was made with love and an expert style that the grandchildren found similar, as they "looked like what Mum had cooked before", suggesting that the recipes that their grandmother invented were passed down to their mother. Therefore, this house is memorable because not only does the cooking of the grandmother have a more pleasing taste but also, visiting the person who invented the recipe lets them talk about the history and heritage of the food.

The conversations/interactions with their grandparents also make it memorable. Like when the grandchildren went into grandma's "room that had air-con", and used their "little hands/to knead and speed" suggesting that they are returning the gratitude and love to their grandmother from the food she made at lunch by massaging her to "her noonday nap". This is memorable because through the act of physical touch they are connecting to their grandma emotionally and taking the time to do this, instead of playing, shows that they treasure her a lot. Even their grandpa is memorable because he shared with them "his story" that left the grandchildren astonished, about what he went through in "China, Swatow; the long way across the sea" just to come and work in Singapore, and showing them his old passports and photos that is "the sepia of youth" of him settling and growing up in Singapore. This suggests that the grandpa and children enjoyed reminiscing about his past. This means that they are spending quality time together and thus have a strong bond. By getting close to their grandparents, the children therefore have a memorable time in the house to look back at.

(ii) My impressions of the children are that they are very curious because they are always observing things intensely like the “air smelt faintly” and “with a lot of food./At eye level, steaming” this tells me that they are very curious about their grandparents house, to not just observe the furniture but even the smell of the place. They even went to investigate the source of the smell to find that it’s not just the wood but “tiles scorched” which is an unusual source because it cannot be easily reached. Furthermore the fact that they were looking at the steam coming out of the food shows that they were looking at it very intently and from the way they described every dish it seemed like they were trying to remember as many details as they could about the house. Therefore it makes me think that they are very curious as they did not take any of these details for granted.

I also think that the children are mischievous when they pretend to be “dead” until “someone calls/our names” because they are trying to avoid going back home. This shows that the children really liked staying with their grandparents because they did not mind hiding in a dirty place “among feather dusters, brooms and mothball nets” just to avoid being caught earlier and told to go home. They also chose “a dark little storeroom under the stairs” so that they could not easily be found as it would go unnoticed by the adults. By going to such extents to hide every week from the adults to delay going home instead of obediently waiting outside, this tells me that the children can be quite mischievous as well.

Finally, I think the children feel regretful when they have to leave because “we never stayed the/Night”. This makes it seem like they wished they could stay over at their grandparents’ place to spend more time with them and perhaps see what the place is like at night as well. Also from “Reversing home, and to Tomorrow’s dreaded school” tells me that the children see going home as a step backwards. This is interesting because usually one would like to go home. Instead by calling it “reverse”, it shows that they do not like it, probably because it means that they have to go back to their usual lives which would not be as interesting or fun as their grandpa’s stories of “the long way across the sea”. As they will miss the love from their grandparents food and excitement in their unique stories, they will thus be regretful about leaving.

My impression of the children is that they are easily captivated by the simple things. The first quote to support this point is from the first stanza where the children were wiggling their toes in the soft carpet. “Weekly toe-sinking, Wriggling fun;”. This quote shows that the children are easily entertained by the simple activity of wiggling their toes in the soft carpet. Another quote to support this point is from the fifth stanza. The grandfather was telling a story about his past to the children and they “marveled at his story.” This shows that the children were captivated by their grandfather's past. These three quotes show that the children are easily captivated by the simple things in life.

2015 - Eclipse

DRAMATIC - Why a sense of fear/death/problem is being created

(i)

Hazimin+Tirmizi [done]

The eclipse seems dramatic in the poem as people were terrified and panicking about the eclipse. The quote “the air growing fearful” suggests that the atmosphere became creepy and scary. This enables the reader to feel the speaker’s fear because of the use of personification which exaggerates the people’s fear in the poem. The poet describes the air, which is a non-living thing, catching the fear from the people who are breathing it in. In the poem, the writer describes the “light decaying” to be scary as the light was dying and “the sun’s losing control” making the earth to be dark as losing control means that the sun cannot produce light anymore. This causes people to be terrified because they will be unable to see and thus hurt themselves in their daily tasks. Not only that, light represents hope in this poem as it makes the “shadows lose their anxiety” when the sun comes back. Therefore when the light and its source are gone, people feel terrified that there is no more hope in their lives. Thus exaggerating the presence of fear and death caused by the eclipse in the poem, dramatises it.

Kevin+Idah [done]

What makes the eclipse seem dramatic is “a sickness such as the moon has never known” this suggests that the writer is using hyperbole to make the sickness seem very infectious and powerful because it can not only infect the moon which is a non-living thing but it can also make the entire moon sick, which is very large. Furthermore it also “infects the earth” which means that it is fast-spreading as it can do so in “four or five minutes”. This makes the eclipse seem dramatic because the hyperbole makes it seem dangerous as there is nowhere for the speaker to hide from it since there is no safe space on the entire earth and even the moon to run to. Therefore the speaker will likely get infected very quickly and possibly these might be his last few words before dying which would make this an important last moment for him.

Sherrin

The eclipse seems dramatic in the poem as people were in a dilemma about the eclipse happening. The quote “a surprise too” suggest that the speaker was shocked yet the reader also knew “you can set your watch to what’s going to happen” so the speaker also expected it. This means that the speaker was caught unprepared for it to happen and felt lost when it occurred. Although it was supposed to be a rare, special occasion, the speaker felt that the eclipse made the world “a shadowy place” and afraid that nothing would go back to normal. As the speaker was caught between being terrified and shocked, both of which are unpleasant, the eclipse is therefore dramatic.

(ii) I think that at first there is **confusion** in the persona/speaker because he has two opposing feelings, that of “inevitably” and “a surprise” at the same time. This is because he knows that the eclipse is coming but it is still a shock to him because he cannot accept it. This is because although he knows that it will come physically, he doesn't know how to feel emotionally about it, whether it will be a blessing or a curse. He was feeling this way because the eclipse is a rare occurrence so it is fortunate for him to be able to see it. Yet on the other hand, when the sky turns dark it's a sign to him that the world is going to end. Therefore the reader was puzzled about what to think or feel towards the eclipse.

Then, a sense of fear as the persona projecting his feelings onto non-living things, which personifies them with illness such as “the barn isn't well” and “drains the life of fields houses”. **Personification intensifies or enhances his fear because non-living things can't usually feel fear. So if they are able to feel fear, it means that the sensation is so strong that it makes them come alive.** He was feeling this way as he was frightened due to the “light decaying” and he thinks that the “world losing interest in itself”. This tells me that the sky turned dark and that the world has given up hope on surviving for future generations. Therefore by personifying his environment with a sense of fear, we can see that the persona gave in to fear after initially being confused.

Finally, **a feeling of relief** as “the sentence is lifted” and “fields recover their breath”, leading the speaker to feel like he can “make plans/live again”. When “darkness changes its mind, the sentence is lifted” makes the persona feel as if the darkness decided to lift its judgement passed onto the land and give the people a second chance to live. **This would make everyone relieved that they can continue to “live again” and perhaps make full use of this second chance in their lives. Furthermore we have to be aware that darkness here is a metaphor for hopelessness and despair.** Therefore when “finally reprieved/the day walks free” we feel **relieved as he was given this opportunity to not take for granted the beauty of his surroundings and appreciate them.**