

Student's Name or Students' Names

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Assignment Due Date

Character Analysis: Boy (Percy Boyd) Staunton

Boy (Percy Boyd) Staunton is the antagonist in Robert Davis' *Fifth Business*. His character is integral to the story in that he helps bring out the major themes. Boy is a bully who comes from a wealthy family. He is rude, immoral, and sketchy. He is a friend of Dunstan's, the novel's protagonist, yet his greatest enemy. Dunstan's story and his journey in life are mainly a result of Boy's actions as a child. Throughout the story, Davies projects Boy as a bully. He also portrays him as malicious, adulterous, abusive, deceitful, disrespectful, and narcissistic, among other traits.

Boy is malicious; he throws a snowball at Dunstan, intending to hurt him. The snowball misses Dunstan and accidentally hits Mrs. Dempsey, who is pregnant. Consequently, she has a premature delivery of her son, Paul. This causes her a lot of mental stress, leading her to be ostracized from polite society. Boy also marries Leola, a girl whom Dunstan fancies. By that time, he had become a wealthy businessman but maintained many negative traits. Boy is adulterous and abusive. He abuses Leola to great lengths, eventually leading to her death. Davies portrays Boy as a deceitful person who does not own up to his mistakes. Towards the novel's end, when Dunstan, Paul, and Boy meet, Boy denies yet again that he had thrown the snowball that led to the premature birth of Paul. The truth eventually comes out when he is found dead, having driven into a river. The stone in the snowball that hit Mrs. Dempsey is found close to his mouth.

Boy's character is essential to the story because it brings out the theme of morality. Boy is the opposite of Dunstan. He is immoral, a bully, lacks remorse, and is controlling. He is unfaithful to Leola, making him immoral. He proves himself as lacking remorse when he consistently refuses to admit that he is the one who threw a snowball at Mrs. Dempsey. This is even though Dunstan witnesses the entire thing. He says, "...Percy threw, and the snowball hit Mrs. Dempsters on the back of the head." Mr. Dempster "might have caught her if he had not turned at once to see who had thrown the snowball" (Davies 2).

Boy is also a bully. His bullying habits affect many other characters. Dunstan says, "Percy had been throwing snowballs at me...and I had ducked them all..." (Davies 2). This shows that he was a bully from a young age. He also bullies and abuses his wife. After the birth of their child, Boy mistreats his wife and is unfaithful and cruel. Another trait of Boy's is his narcissism, which is evident in his treatment of women. He objectifies them and is always disrespectful. To justify his adulterous nature, he says, "A man with my physical needs can't be tied down to one woman- especially not a woman ...who just lies there like a damned sandbag" (Davies 178-179). This shows his lack of respect for women and his objectification of them.

Boy is also controlling towards his friend Dunstan and his wife, Leola. He wants her to take up the role of the perfect wife. He also wants her to keep up with his social life, which is tedious and unfulfilling. Dunstan says, "She was trying hard, but she could not keep pace with Boy's social advancement" (Davies 145). He also says, "He wanted to make her into the perfect wife for a rising young entrepreneur..." (Davies 119). This proves that he was narcissistic, dominant, and controlling.

Boy is an interesting character and is perhaps one of the most important characters in the story. Despite his apparent immunity to his immorality, he is a testament that evil deeds never go

unpunished, as he dies horribly in the end. He rubs shoulders with most of the characters in the novel, helping bring out the novel's themes and other characters' traits.

Work Cited

Davies, Robertson. *Fifth Business*. Signet Book, 1971.

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