Baylee Hayes

Mrs. Rutan

AP Literature and Composition

11 November 2013

# Eberahart and Hosseini Shared a Little Lamb

 When Mary had a little lamb, his fleece was as white as snow.

*Snow.*

Why couldn’t the lambs fleece be mostly white with a little black spot? Or why couldn’t its fleece be brown? It is because the nursery rhyme wouldn’t give off the same “spotless” tone as it would if the fleece on the lamb were completely white. The color white represents innocence and purity, and tying this color with a lamb—which also signifies purity—makes this playful and innocent tone more distinct. Both Khaled Hosseini’s novel, The Kite Runner, and Richard Eberahart’s poem, “For a Lamb,” have this tone and symbol within their writing’s. This parallel in both pieces makes them both exceptional writings to accompany each other because you see the same innocence, symbolism, and use of the color in both of the pieces.

 Hassan is the literary definition of innocent. He never changes his good-natured ways and he knows that his duty is to sacrifice himself for Baba and Amir. Hassan is personified by this innocence—we see this when he is compared to a lamb. Hosseini writes, “… I caught a glimpse of [Hassan’s] face. Saw the resignation in it… It was the look of the lamb,” (76). By comparing Hassan to a lamb, it almost transforms him into a metaphor of innocence like the white lamb. This color white is repeating and significant. On the night after Amir is the last kite fighter left, it says, “Snow blanketed every rooftop and weighed on the branches of the stunted mulberry trees that lined our street,” (60). Snow is yet another symbol for purity and cleanliness—and it is also white. This is a theme that you can also see in the poem. You can use Richard Eberahart’s poem, “For a Lamb” to complement Khaled Hosseini’s novel, The Kite Runner due to the similar themes and symbols.

 Richard Eberhart’s poem “For a Lamb” has the major theme of innocence too. The lamb itself is a Christian symbol for purity giving the poem the same symbol and the major theme of The Kite Runner all in one. You see an obvious juxtaposition when Eberhart writes, “a putrid lamb,/Propped with daisies,”(1-2). The dead carcass of the lamb and the daisies are complete opposites. The daisies stand for innocence, purity, and loyal love while the corpse of the lamb is disgusting. You can connect these daisies from the poem to the snow in the novel. The daises and the snow are part of the setting, and they foreshadow this sense of goodness and pureness which makes it ironic how in both cases innocence and purity are nowhere to be found. This death of the lamb shows the destruction of the lamb’s innocence. The lambs life was stolen from him just like Hassan’s innocence. In the last stanza Eberhart writes, “Say he's in the wind somewhere,/Say, there's a lamb in the daisies,” (7-8). This shows that it isn’t important how innocent and pure the lamb was, people will only remember the rotting lamb that’s on the hill; this matches up with how Amir feels about Hassan. After everything Hassan and Amir have been through, the only thing that he can focus on while revisiting in Kabul is, “…Assef’s quick, rhythmic grunts,” (77). He didn’t remember the pomegranate tree. He didn’t remember how he was the last kite fighter. He didn’t remember anything cheerful—just bitter memories of that cold winter night in the alley.

 Whether Mary’s little lamb is as white as snow or rotting in a field of daises; that lamb symbolizes something more than a small farm animal. It is a huge Christian symbol for purity and innocence and is used everywhere from nursery rhymes to AP novels. Being innocent takes a great amount of character and to stay innocent after something terrible such as being sexually abused is difficult but is sophisticatedly shown throughout Hosseini’s piece, The Kite Runner. By reading both of these works you can make the connection of comparing Hassan and a lamb making your literary depth for both pieces more profound.

That’s why Mary’s little lamb was white and not mostly white with a little black spot.

Works Cited:

Bildir, Hata. "For A Lamb-Richard Eberahart." *http://www.poemhunter.com/richard-eberhart/*. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Nov. 2013. <http://www.poemhunter.com>.

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2003. Print.