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Example of metaphor in story aunty misery by judith cofer

Death personifies importance in story The central theme of "Aunty Misery" is death's significance in the world, which is exemplified through Death's entrapment in the pear tree and textual descriptions. He becomes a character who drives the plot and appears as a tired traveler, with vivid and lengthy descriptions that convey his importance. When he speaks, his voice is described as dry and hoarse, highlighting his significance. The story highlights the value of mortality, particularly through the struggles of undertakers, pharmacists, and doctors, who cannot thrive without it. Death's benevolent nature is also evident in his kindness to Aunty Misery, whom he helps with her pears. This portrayal contrasts with immortality, which is shown to be troublesome and comes with a cost. The story implies that immortality leads to stagnation, as seen in Aunty Misery's character, who earns immortality by tricking Death but suffers from a stagnant life. The narrative also suggests that misery is an inherent aspect of life, personified by Aunty Misery, and that she will continue to live as long as the world exists. A elderly woman, known as Aunty Misery, lives alone with a pear tree as her only companion, yet she never appears to feel lonely. Despite being perceived as miserly and unhappy by those around her, Aunty Misery is actually kind and charitable, as seen in her actions towards a weary traveler who seeks shelter and food from her. She also shows charity by granting freedom to neighborhood children who had been taunting her, and even offers aid to Death when he appears as a tired old man. Her selfless nature ultimately leads to her achieving immortality. The story explores themes of loneliness, charity, and the rewards that come with giving freely, without expectation of payment or reward. The tale revolves around Aunty Misery, an enigmatic figure who is both protagonist and main character. Her actions raise questions about her role as a hero, making her more of an antihero whose values are at odds with traditional heroism. While living a solitary life might not be inherently wrong, it contributes to the neighborhood children's harassment. Aunty Misery's selfishness prevents her from dying, yet she shows kindness and generosity by releasing Death back into the world for the benefit of others. The narrative is presented in third-person limited perspective, where the narrator has insight into only one character's thoughts and feelings. In this case, it's Aunty Misery's inner workings that are revealed through her observations and thoughts. The story showcases her compassion towards those dependent on Death, as well as her desire not to be unfair to them. Ortiz Cofer's "Aunty Misery" draws from a Puerto Rican folktale but presents universal themes that transcend cultural and temporal boundaries. The narrative's setting is vague, allowing the story to be applicable anywhere, while its historical context remains ambiguous. Despite its origins, the tale effectively conveys the value of death and explores the existence of misery in the world. The use of descriptive language in the story is sparse, reserving vivid descriptions for key figures like Death and the pear tree. Aunty Misery's character serves as a complex representation of human nature, making her both an intriguing and thought-provoking protagonist. The story has a timeless quality to it, with no modern technology or machines mentioned, nor any reference to manual techniques used before its advent. This universality is characteristic of folktales that explain natural phenomena through anecdotes or metaphors. The themes are conveyed more effectively in a nonspecific context. Death, as a personified figure, appears to Aunty Misery as an exhausted traveler with a dry and hoarse voice, symbolizing his power over life. This emphasis on death's importance as a main character reinforces the story's theme of mortality. In contrast, doctors and undertakers struggle to make a living, serving as social commentary on the inevitability of death. The narrator suggests that medicines are futile against the 'inevitable,' further underscoring this point. Conversely, elderly people yearn for death as a means to escape worldly miseries and find rest in the afterlife. Death is portrayed as benevolent and understanding, granting Aunty Misery's wishes and retrieving a gift for her out of consideration. The story offers insights into death but raises questions about the nature of misery. While Aunty Misery is not personified like Death, the narrative leaves open whether it can be seen as an explanation for the persistence of misery in the world. She does not appear to be miserable herself, but rather an old woman living alone who seems to enjoy her solitary nature, enjoying life without loneliness. Her behavior is hardly inappropriate when children steal from her pear tree, and she reacts with kindness rather than anger. The concept of "misery loves company" also doesn't apply well in her case as the personification of misery would likely lack good traits. Death's universality allows its tale to transcend cultures, time, and place, making it a hallmark of folktales. The story's lack of specific details about setting or historical context enables readers to connect with the narrative on a deeper level. Folktales often use universal themes, such as explaining natural phenomena through anecdotes or metaphors, which are more effectively conveyed in a nonspecific context. Death is personified as a tired traveler who sounds like wind through a catacomb when he sighs. This descriptive language draws attention to Death's importance and reinforces the story's focus on mortality. The narrative also discusses the futility of doctors and undertakers, making a commentary on social issues. However, the main character's attempt to avoid death is ironic, as the story suggests that death can be a benevolent force. The elderly people's desire to die and move on to the "next world" underscores Death's role in facilitating passage. This concept is further supported by Death's matter-of-fact approach, allowing him to grant requests from the living and even providing souvenirs from the afterlife. The story highlights the complexities of death, presenting it as a natural part of life rather than an inevitability to be feared. Given article text here: In order to bring home some fruit for her aunt out of consideration for her age and frailty, much can be inferred about the concept of misery in this story. However, does it also teach us anything about the nature of misery itself? To put it differently, can "Aunty Misery" be interpreted as an explanation for why there is never-ending suffering in the world? The character of Aunty Misery differs significantly from Death in terms of personification. While Death's inherent nature is clearly portrayed through various descriptions, no such description exists for the story's protagonist. It's worth noting that she is never depicted as being miserable or as a physical embodiment of misery, which is the opposite of what one would expect. For instance, when the narrative first introduces her, Aunty Misery is referred to as an elderly woman. Only after the neighborhood children start calling her this does she gain the nickname "Aunty Misery." Additionally, while it's true that Aunty Misery is quite covetous about her pear tree, her response to the children stealing from her is hardly unjustifiable. In reality, Aunty Misery's personality appears to be far more benevolent than miserable. She lives alone but is not lonely; instead, she seems to enjoy her solitary lifestyle. It's especially ironic when you think about the common saying "misery loves company," which suggests that it would be preposterous (unlikely) for an old woman like her to be the personification of misery. Also, one might assume that a personification of misery would not exhibit any admirable qualities, yet Aunty Misery is shown to be a kind, caring, considerate, and compassionate individual. She provides exemplary charity to the sorcerer in disguise by offering him shelter and feeding him, as well as making him a bed in the warmest spot in her house. This kindness comes with no expectation of payment or reward, which would seem to reinforce the underlying moral that good deeds are rewarded. The fact that Aunty Misery does receive a reward seems to suggest that charity is indeed its own reward. Furthermore, Aunty Misery desires nothing more than to live her life in peace: she doesn't spread unhappiness or discord wherever she goes (which would be what one might expect of the personification of misery). The punishment she metes out to the children is neither vindictive nor unjust. When elderly individuals who wish to die are unable to do so, Aunty Misery feels sympathetic towards them. Similarly, when doctors, pharmacists, and undertakers struggle due to her actions, she shows empathy for their situation as well. She doesn't want "to be unfair." This characteristic seems to contradict the idea that Aunty Misery is a personification of misery. Rather than exacerbate or maintain the suffering she has caused, Aunty Misery reduces it by agreeing to free Death in exchange for immortality. It's hard to fault her for this decision. "Stories for Students" is a publication from the Gale Group that explores analysis, context, and criticism of frequently taught short stories. This volume includes work by Judith Ortiz Cofer, published in 2001, as well as an essay on her story "Aunty Misery" by Leah Tieger, published in 2010.