

SAMPLE EVALUATIVE ESSAY

Trial – Franz Kafka

At the beginning of the novel Trail, on Josef's 30th birthday, two court officials come to the apartment to announce that he was arrested. From the very beginning, we can notice that something is weird. They told him that he was arrested, but they do not tell him why. Josef doesn't know what he has done wrong, and the officials cannot explain to him the reason for his arrest. He can normally continue his life and go to work at the bank. Although he is arrested.

After a few days, he receives a call for a hearing to be held on Sunday so that Josef would not have to leave his job. The court is in an ordinary building. On the last floor there is a courtroom. The appearance of the courtroom is also very strange. The eyes of Josef are on the people who respond to every word of his. He is upset because he still does not know what he was accused of and does not take the opportunity to find out at the hearing.

Josef's uncle comes to talk to him. He advises him to take a lawyer because his case has become very serious. Josef K. goes to an old lawyer for a conversation and wonder how he is already familiar with his case. He does not receive an explanation of his accusation, but the attorney assures him that he can help him. Already at the first visit to the lawyer, Josef falls in love with his assistant Lena and they start a strange relationship. Josef K. seems to have been alluded to in his case. He goes to a painter who says he can help him. In exchange for help, Josef buys several of his paintings, but he still does not understand how the painter can help him. Every time Josef goes to the lawyer, the lawyer tells him that the case is progressing, but he does not see it. Josef decided to fire him.

At the end of the novel, on Josef's 31st birthday, two men come in black. As we see the cyclic structure of the novel is closed here. They take him to the quarry for the execution. They put his

head on a stone and put a knife into his heart. Just before his death, Josef K. shows a rebellion against the system and the trial, and his last words are: "Like a dog!".

As already stated in the text of the novel *Trail*, we can encounter very strange circumstances in which the main hero Josef K. is found. The motives that pervade through the whole work are: indeterminacy, absurdity and opacity. Uncertainty arises at the beginning of the novel. The apartment in which Josef K. is located it's not determined or well-defined, nor is his physical appearance described so that we can imagine him. We do not know where the action takes place, nor in what period. We do not find out what crime was committed by Josef.

The absurdity is that the arrest of Josef K. goes peacefully and court officials do not lead him to prison. He can continue a normal life and only needs to appear in court. Additional absurd motives are the courtrooms located in the attic of an ordinary residential building in the dangerous part of the city, the laundry drying in the courtroom, and Josef is indifferent to the arrest. The lack of transparency is most noticeable in strange dialogues that are confusing and the information we learn from the dialog does not match. There are gulls in the courtrooms and there are many people.

Josef K. is the main character of the novel and the whole story revolves around him. He is a young clerk working in a bank. He does not have friends and lives alone. He is very different from other minor characters in the novel. At some moments he wants to find out why he is accused and what will happen to his case. But, he is mostly disinterested in his environment. His mood varies greatly, from a state of indifference to extreme agony around the case. He starts relationship with Lena, but does not think about her and does not care about her.

The work by its title suggests an action in the center of the court process, but the act is actually Kafka's rebellion against the system and the bureaucracy that he knows. The "trial" can thus signify the very trial of man's struggle against the greater of him and his helplessness. The court, which as an invisible instance, but again existing, extends throughout the work, is condemned by an individual who does not even know what his guilt and prosecute is. Human life is thus reduced to pattern and fits into forms of robotic life where laws and systems are above life.

"The trial" is also interpreted as the indisputability and inevitability of destiny, as we see in Josef's behavior at the end of the novel, where he relentlessly handed down a death sentence. The whole concept of alienation is a reflection of the writer's attempt to find himself.

References

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