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Literary Relationship Paper

English II

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“You died.”

“What? When?” I asked the voice.

“Not too long ago, it seems. Your documentation says you died at 4:32 PM.”

My sight was blurry but I could see the silhouette of large man in front of me. His head was slightly declined as if he was reading a piece of paper on a desk. I could hear the rustle of a busy office around me. I could tell there was a woman behind me taking a phone call, but her words escaped me.

“Mr. Roland? Sir?” the voice insisted.

The man’s voice was the only thing my mind would let me focus on. I continued to ignore him until a sudden urge rolled through my body and I instantly looked forward attentively.

“That’s better. So, Henry, we have some business to attend to.”

“Where are we?”

“Here.”

“Where’s here?”

“That’s not important, Henry.”

Something about this room felt familiar. I’ve been here before. The smell. I knew the smell.

“How can I be dead if I’m talking to you?” I asked with a slight tremor in my throat.

“All right, Henry, if it’ll get you to be quiet I’ll tell you whatever you want,” claimed the voice. “What would you like me to tell you?”

Something about this man was throwing off my judgment. I couldn’t remember what I wanted to know. For the life of me I couldn’t figure out what was going on. I kept quiet for a few moments in thorough confusion.

“Okay, then. Let us continue,” he said, acknowledging my silence.

Then I remembered: I was dead. What was this man doing? I couldn't remember a thing for that split second. Why did it come back to me right after he spoke again?

"Wait! Wait!" I exclaimed.

"Fine, fine. What is it?" he answered in exasperation.

"Where are we?"

"Your office."

Of course! It's Wednesday! The smell! Cookies! Jennifer always brings in cookies on Wednesdays.

"What are we doing here?"

"You will find out soon enough. We aren't staying here long. I figured we ought to start here. Familiar territory, you know?" he answered.

"Where are we going?" I questioned the voice calmly. Then I remembered: I didn't know this man! "Wait a minute! Who are you?"

"I'm the man you talk to when you die," he said with a slight chuckle.

I watched the man stand up. My vision was back to normal now, but something was wrong. Everything around me began fading out and the only clear image I could see was the smile of a fairly large black man with reading glasses staring down at me. Soon enough even his unforgettable face began to lose its opaque color. Everything was gone. Then, a few moments later, I noticed the familiar feeling of falling into a gentle sleep.

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"Wake up, Henry."

The infamous voice was calling again. Only, this time, I couldn't see him. In fact, I couldn't see anything.

"What, what did you do to my eyes? I can't see anything!" I screamed loudly so he could not ignore me.

"Nothing," he explained.

Flick! I could see him now.

"I just forgot to turn on the lights, is all."

I was in a room with dark green walls blocked mostly by several full bookshelves. There was something different about this room, however. Besides the lack of windows, or any conceivable entry point, there were 5 walls. I was sitting in

the center in a rather uncomfortable chair and looking directly at the man. He had a book in his hand this time. I could see from the spine it was titled "God Knows", but I had never heard of it before. He also had reading glasses on, but not your typical glasses. They had a thin, white frame and seemed too small for his face.

"So, I think it's time we get to work."

"Hold on! Why did you bring me here? Who are you?" I yelled. I was tired of him avoiding my questions. I wanted answers.

"Fine, since we are here anyway, I guess it can't hurt to let you in on things," he taunted. "Most people call me God, but I prefer Jeff, really. 'God' sounds so official."

My heart stopped. What was going on? How could *he* be God? Where are the clouds and the angels?

"As for where we are, this is Hell."

My eyes widened as I heard his last words. Hell? How could I be in Hell? There is no way this is Hell! I can't go to Hell!

"This isn't hell! There are no lava pits or demons. I suppose Satan is hiding behind one of these bookshelves?" I challenged.

He laughed. He had a good laugh; the kind of laugh that makes you want to trust someone.

"Well, of course not. You obviously don't understand what is going on here. Let me just tell you a story." he said. "Back in the day, around six thousand years ago, people were really, really stupid. I created them to worship me—I was a pretty lonely child—but they turned out to be less educated than I had hoped for."

"Wait, so you created the world as a child? Aren't you God, the almighty? How could you have been a child?"

"Well, we all start somewhere, Henry. I'd explain how that works but I don't really want to teach a high school health class. I created the world when I was 8. My dad bought me Create-A-World. Shame they went out of business."

"So, Earth, the world, me, we are just parts of your childhood toys?"

"Yeah. We all need something to entertain us. You had LEGOS and I had mankind."

"All right. Fine. But if you were going to bring me to Hell why did you take me to my office first?"

"Please let me finish my story. You'll understand everything when the time is right." he said. "So. People started doing very stupid things when I first created

them. They were choosing leaders to take power, killing others left and right, and moving all around the world. I had to do something. I mean I only rented Europe, and some parts of Africa. So I bought Earth and decided to create a religion, something to keep them busy and create standard morals. Of course, you guys managed to ruin that too. I mean the Catholic Church kind of took over. I would have never made some of those rules. No sex before marriage? Crazy. And Hell never really existed before someone put in the Bible as a joke and it got mass printed.”

“What? So if Hell doesn’t exist, what are we doing here?”

“Oh, right. This is ‘Hell’. It’s the codename for the paperwork handling office. You’d be surprised how much paperwork we get up here. I figured we could just call it Hell and let all the criminals work here.”

“And the people believed that you were Satan? They did all your paperwork?”

“I majored in Theater Arts.”

“Oh, I see,” I responded. “So why am I here, then? I’m a good person.”

“You’re special, Henry. And I needed to speak with you in person. Plus I thought it’d be funny if I told you that you were going to Hell.”

“So you killed me?”

“Basically. Anyway, what, well who, I wanted to talk to you about is Megan.”

Damn it! Why would he bring her up?

“Look, God, Jeff, I really don’t want to talk about her. We’ve been divorced for 2 years now. It’s over.”

“I understand that. I’m God after all. But you need to realize that life doesn’t revolve around you. You can’t hold a grudge. You’re going to screw yourself over in the end.”

“God, please. I am living a good life. What does it matter if I don’t forgive her?”

“It isn’t about being a good person. I could care less. The fact is I know where you are going, and you aren’t going to like it.”

“If this is all you have to say, then I want to leave now.”

“You’re dead, Henry. Don’t forget that.”

“I know I’m dead. You killed me. And know I’m stuck in Hell. Forgiveness isn’t in my DNA, God.”

“Forgiving is a talent, Henry. I don’t just give it to anyone, but I know you have it in you. I made you. Think about your kids Henry. Think about you are doing to them with the things you say about their mother. You’re going in the wrong direction Henry. That’s why I brought you here, to see what’s going to happen to you if you keep it up.”

“What does it matter? I’m dead. I’m stuck here forever.”

“For the last time, Henry: I’m God.” He smiled at me then it all went black.

I woke up in a sweat. My head was pounding my eyes took longer to adjust to the darkness than usual. I looked to my right and saw my alarm clock: 5:59 AM. It was a Wednesday. Jennifer was bringing cookies and I needed to have a little talk with my kids. At 6 o’clock the alarm went off and I got out of bed and picked up my glasses. On the nightstand I found a note. The text was blurred except for a sly signature at the bottom. “Good luck. Sincerely, Jeff.” I dropped the paper back on to the table and walked out of my room with a tired, happy smile.

The end.