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Subject: Essay from college assignment. February

" THE CATHEDRAL OF CARVER "

a Literary interpretation of Cathedral ,

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Prolegomenon :

What is Cathedral about ?

(1) One could say it is a story about a blind man 's friendship with a former employee
or

(2) A ' blind ' husband to his wife's emotional needs / friendship with her former
employer . or

(3) A husbands jealousies and prejudices , and insecurities towards his wife's friend .

This essay will establish that it's " all " of the above , and the take away is that :

" A Husband finds freedom in the most unlikely friendship
",
with his wife's friend .

Proposition for review : " This blind man { BM} , an old friend of my wife's , he
was on his way to spend the night . His

wife had just died . So he was visiting the dead wife's relatives in Connecticut . He
called my wife from his in-laws .

arrangements were made " , (p.222) and my wife will meet him at the station. She
hadn't seen him since she

worked for him one summer in Seattle ten years ago . But she and the blind man had
kept in touch . They made tapes and

mailed them back and forth . I wasn't enthusiastic about his visit . He was no one I knew
. And his being blind bothered

me. My idea of blindness came from the movies. in the movies , the blind moved slowly
and never laughed . some times

they were led by seeing-eye dogs . a blind man in my house was not something I look forward to . " Id.

Summary : The author , Carver , of Cathedral , do not name our narrator / or give the speaker a name . We see the world

through him , and his nemesis Robert (the blind man {BM}the wife's best friend/emotional lover ? /mentor /former

employer , gives him the name or call him Bub , so we will do the same for continuity sake .

Bub's wife friend and former employer , Robert , is coming to spend the night , at the least , one night with them. as he seek

to over come the lost of his own wife .

She hadn't seeing him since she worked for him one summer in Seattle ten years ago . But she and Robert : " kept in touch ",

" they made tapes and mailed them" ;

Bub is definitely not happy about this and pull no punches in let it be know to us , the reader : " I wasn't enthusiastic about

his visit ... He was no one I knew A blind man in my house was not something I looked forward to ";

Bub also kind of " chose " not to know Robert , as his wife tried to tell him stuff about Robert : " She helped (one summer)

organize his little office ... they become good friends , my wife and the blind man. how do I know these things ? she told me."

She also : showed me the poem " , " she ...tried ... to write about it "; " on her last day in the office , the blind man asked

if he could touch her face ". " in the poem , she recalled his fingers and the way they had moved around over her face ".

she talked about what she had felt ".

Bub was jealous of the way , Robert made his wife feel , the closeness and the intimacy she had with Robert :

" SHE WROTE A POEM OR TWO EVERY YEAR , USUALLY AFTER SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT HAPPEN TO HER "

(p 222)

" she told the blind man she'd written a poem and he was in it ". " she told him everything ' (p224)

while it was a subtle nuance when Robert came home with the wife and Bub saw how : she was beaming " .

you can smell the jealousy rising from the pages of the book like ether . Bub wanted , even though he was too blind himself to

see it , some of that beam too . (p. 224)

He wanted to be the one she had ran to that : " one night she got to feeling lonely and cut off... and she went and wallowed

all the pills and capsules in the medicine chest and washed them down with a bottle of gin then got into a hot bath . "

" she put it all on tape ... over the years , she put all kinds of stuff on tapes and she sent the tapes off lickety-split ".(p223)

" Next to writing a poem every year , I think it was her chief means of recreation " . " of course , she told the blind man when

she and I began going out " . " she told him everything , or so it seem to me " . (p 223)

She even played a tape for him so he could be included . (P. 223) " Once she asked me if I'd like to hear the latest tape " .

show him how the tapes were made and innocent , to relieve him of the notion she was cheating on him or she was having an

affair . which from Bub's point of telling the story , she was , even if it was just an ' EMOTIONAL AFFAIR ' , .

But Robert was her friend , maybe even a father figure for her . She started working for him at a very young age when she

had no money and appear to have had no support or family with the exception of her fiancé (p. 222) and she had stayed in

touch with him , he showed & taught her about things she didn't know or couldn't had known . for eample :

what it's like to be blind , and even some sensational things . " The blind man asked if he could touch her face , " touch

" her nose ---even her neck ! . she never forgot it " . " she talked about (It in her poem) . (what) went through her mind

when the blind man touched her ...lips " . (p.222)

Bub him self came to discover this sensational freedom when he , also finally let go of biases and jealousy ,(p.222) and

befriend Robert , though it took some extra procreational items to help out " I rolled us two fat numbers , lit one and

passed it " . (told him to inhale and) " hold it as long as you can " . " He found my hand , the hand with the pen . he closed

his hand over my hand " (p.232) . " I couldn't stop " .Id. " I took up the pen again , and he found my hand , " Id.

" I'm no artist . But I kept drawing just the same " . (p.232-3). " Close your eye's now " , the blind man said to me .

" I did it . I closed them just like he said . they 're closed I said " . Id. " His fingers rode my fingers as my hand went over the

paper . It as like nothing else in my life up to now " .

This was a " Cathedral Moment " , for Bub in many ways : (1) He experienced what it was like to be blind in real life ,

contrary to the absurd generalizations he Willy nilly held at the top of the hour ;p. 222 & 232-3)

(2) He tried something new Id.

(3) He was able to see & experience to some small degree , why his wife felt Robert special & loved him so . (P.223)

(4) He may have developed a new friend , and an important one , because it was his wife (best friend extrapolated) .

5) He was abstractly drawing something he had just seem and doing so with out sight . getting in touch with his senses .

(p.232-33)

The sexual innuendo in the story kind of teased the reader to believe that Bub himself , liked his own jealousy :

" She told him everything or so it seem to me " . (p.223) " after being inseparable for eight years __my wife words .."

(Beulah) lived & worked together , slept together ---had sex , sure .. (p.224)

" my wife covered her mouth ...yawned ... stretched . she said , I think I'll go up stairs and put on my robe ..I'll change into

something else ... " " she'd been gone so long I didn't know if she was going to come back . I thought she might have gone

to bed ... (p.227-28)

Was Bub panicking or did he assume she did more than just change clothing , but decided , as well to take a hot bath ...

shave and what else , the imagination can conjure , His description of her coming down in the pink robe & slippers could be

coded , symbolic to vulva chromatic. (p.228) leading to that titillating notion , then he spark further curiosity with :

" Her head lay across the back of the sofa , her mouth open . she 'd turned so that her robe slipped away from her legs ,

exposing a 'JUICY THIGH ' , . I reached to draw her rode back over her , and it was then that I glanced at the blind man, what

the hell, I flipped the robe (not rope) (all the way) open again ," (exposing her whole body , nude ???????) .(p.229)

one can only be curious as to what she had on or not on in that robe , as the Delicious description of that thigh can not be

easily brushed aside . inquiring minds want to know . :-)

Now , there exist as well a dichotomy , as on the one hand , this could be a titillating act of affection from the husband

standing , on the other hand and judging from the wife's reaction , when she woke , asking : " what's going on ' .(p.233)

at first you don't get her reaction . then when you see it from her P>>O>>V> . --her robe wide open / hanging open Id.

--(she might be nude) Bub gifted us with this free fun fact / lower self sensationalism , she next see her husband in

front of her , on the floor , hand being caressed by the hand of the blind man , drawing structures on paper , and her last

awaking moments had been when they all had been smoking weed ' . this image : she could had fallen asleep and awoke to

the aftermath of a menage 'a' trois , or even worst , an unwanted assault from modern or the nonce point .

My conclusion is that , Bub , though not clear yet, has just became friends with the blind man he was previously jealous of

and may have come to see the gulf that existed between him and his wife : " every night I smoke dope and stayed up long

as I could before I fell asleep . My wife and I hardly ever went to bed at the same time " . (p.229) .

It should have been the opposite .

It should have been or he should have said : I hardly ever stay up late , as I go to bed every night with the wife , unless

there is something special to keep me away from her , as I'm not indifferent to the bed , even if it is just us spooning .

Cathedral had a lot to unpack , I could have went many directions in my approach . I felt this angle worth the explore .

though , my analysis could not see the punch of the twenty- peso coin remark other then a dig at robert or another

subtle prejudice remark of Bub . I found my self attractive to the wife even though no physical description was given ,

unless you take the juicy thigh in . but her emotional vulnerability , her dedication to her friendship , if that was all it was ,

I did get that she might have been in love with Robert , though it was or is an unacted upon love , or secret love ;

also , her dedication to her marriage to Bub , she loved him too , I believe , in other ways probably different from Robert ;

over all , and though not explored , nor narrated from her person , she seem interesting to me and to be a lovely person .

I part with this quote as passing wisdom : " it is said that , giving your love to another , is given them the ability to destroy

you , but trusting them not to do so " . and like Love . " a pile of rocks , ceases to be a rock pile , the moment a single

person contemplates it , bearing within ... (their mind) the image of a " Cathedral " , (or an institution of learning) .

paraphrase .

Stay F♣cus , Stay Lov♥ed. Uhuru.