

"SONNET 29"

(This is an interpretation of the short story by Allyn Wood published in the last edition of this magazine.)

GRACE L. WHIPPLE

Allyn Wood uses symbolism to a rather large extent, and quite effectively, I believe. We are introduced to one of the cats, with its characteristic reserve and mystery, in the first paragraph, whereby an ominous atmosphere is created. Miss Wood continues to bring in cats and more cats until we feel just as Argus did about their penetrating presence. The cat, that creature of abstract mystery, quiet ubiquity and impenetrable character, certainly symbolizes the very existence of father and son in a house made mysterious by the father's continual probing for knowledge of what is beyond mortal senses to know.

The citadel, a place of reverence for things unseen, a protection from the wiles of the world, is an appropriate symbol for the life of the father and son, who were for each other sanctuaries of solace and protection from mortal criticism. Even the children on roller skates are deliberately introduced to show Argus the characteristic elements of the outside world. The last bit of symbolism, and one of the strongest in

emotional climax, is the fish-spine on the bed. It repeats to Argus all the facts he knows too well—those cats, and now just the skeleton remaining of the citadel. All the symbols add emotionally to the story, as I have tried to show.

The theme is that of man trying to comprehend that which appears not his to understand, of the unreal against the real, and of a man's decision as to which is the real. It also tells of a boy's conflict within himself as to which to choose, his own life or that of his father. Torn by love and loyalty in conflict with his sense of independence, Argus has difficulty deciding which is best. The former is the theme, and the latter merely a secondary conflict. I cannot think that this story is morbid. True, it deals with a rather sorrowful circumstance, but it does not dwell upon it in an unhealthy or abnormal way. The boy Argus portrays the hope and courage of youth in dealing with such a problem, thus showing a less sorrowful side. I think Miss Wood has given a truly accurate and well-told portrayal of such a problem.

SAMPLING

Music will bring to you laughter and crying pain and comfort the smells of lands and oceans the taste of good food or a woman's lips . . . love . . . hate; the universe grows pregnant with its importance — the words of freedom or oppression, the messages of God. You will see distant lands and places, and the dead will live again in the song of

history.

Music can do all this because music too is a living thing. It is the story of mankind told in a million voices and a thousand languages. It lives and breathes in the city and the country. It sways and dances on the four winds, floats on all oceans and sails through all space with its message for all peoples.

Symphony

ROBERT CHAFFIN