"Everything Stuck to Him" by Raymond Carver

Mr. Oncay's Language Arts
Active Reading Sheet

• Directions: Fill in appropriate notes according to the methods we have practiced. Whenever the term is written in all caps, provide a quotation as evidence.

(line numbers listed)

(1) ____________________: "She's in Milan for Christmas..."

(4) "___________________" - an Italian liqueur. A strong, alcoholic, herbal drink to enjoy after eating.

(1-18) --

The point of view of the story shifts back in time so that it seems like a story within a story.

(19-24) --

(24) "waterfowl" -

(27) ____________________: actions: "boy and girl, husband and wife, father and mother..." The person telling the story refers to the young people at first as girl and boy, but in this line he shows the many changes that happen through experiences.

(24-33) --

(33-41) --

It seems that he does not want to tell about something negative, so he returns to the main story.
(40) "He gets up from his chair and looks out the window." When the older man remembers a poor choice from the past, he reacts by pausing, showing that there is still a conflict within him. Person vs. __________.

(41-47) --

(59) __________: "...to beat the band"

The origin of the phrase probably comes from someone talking or playing louder than an orchestra as if they were trying to "beat the band."

(48-72) --

(73-84) --

(81-84) __________: actions: "What about Betsy?" says the wife, referring to her sister as more beautiful than she. "Betsy too, the boy used to say," says the speaker of the story, again referring to his younger self as a boy. The wife shows that she can be light-hearted in discussion and also humble, pointing out that her sister is more beautiful. The speaker of the story refers to his younger self as self-centered, pointing out his attraction to other women. This also seems to reveal more of the CONFLICT.

(85-102) --
actions: "The boy did a terrible thing. He swore." The older version of the boy is still telling this story, so in this detail, in judging the actions of his past, he shows that he is a wiser man who judges his younger self with some regret. Again, this seems linked to the CONFLICT.

CONFLICT: "...you're going to have to choose." --

CLIMAX: "...went back inside" --

(103-128) --

(129) ______________________: actions: "The boy did a terrible thing. He swore." The older version of the boy is still telling this story, so in this detail, in judging the actions of his past, he shows that he is a wiser man who judges his younger self with some regret. Again, this seems linked to the CONFLICT.

(128-183) --

(183) CONFLICT: "...you're going to have to choose." --

(183-189) --

(189) CLIMAX: "...went back inside" --

(189-227) --

(228-234) --
"Things change, he says. I don't know how they do. But they do without your realizing or wanting them to." In the present, the man reveals that the young love he once had and the pact he made did not last. He seems to be acknowledging that he was unable to make a "choice" to be a supportive father and husband.

CHARACTERIZATION: actions: "...he sees her study her nails." 

The grown up daughter is quiet for a while, keeping her thoughts to herself. Then she takes this opportunity to change the subject. When she asks if he is going to show her the city, it is revealed that they have not seen each other for some time. This reinforces the idea that they have been separated for some time. She moves to put on her boots and he reflects how he had laughed so hard with his young wife in that moment when he upturned his breakfast into his lap.

The man's thoughts hint about the future beyond this point. They also demonstrate opposing images. In one moment, he is a laughing, loving husband and father. However, his thoughts foretell that he would eventually go somewhere else, into the cold.

Throughout the story, images of cold and white dominate. The author refers to the cold outside and warm inside. The young man "shovels snow" and spreads "rock salt." Piles of snow lay nearby outside. He imagines himself enjoying the cold of his hunting trip. He "powders" the baby after the bath, probably a white powder, suggesting her innocence. Yet his wife "turns up the furnace" and falls asleep under a "quilt." When the man pauses from his story to look out the window, "snow is falling on the rooftops." In the past, when he goes to his car to prepare it for hunting, he has to take the time to remove the "ice" from the windows. At the end of the story, he returns to the window to see that "It's dark now, but snow is still falling." The use of the white often hints to innocence or a longing for it. The use of cold suggests the opposite of the warmth that people share. It is isolating, like the daughter who is "cool, and every bit the survivor" and in the end, stifles her feelings.