**Representation of Men**

Men are portrayed in a variety of ways throughout the short stories;

**Home;**

In home, Mr Jackson is portrayed as being superior to his wife. He is the dominant one within the relationship and does not treat his wife nicely,

**‘You worked in a factory till I picked you up at that dance.’**

**‘You didn’t even have proper table manners when I met you.’**

Mr Jackson feels he is superior to his wife and implies that she was nothing until she met him.

He is also arrogant and as he is determined to show-off to the people he used to know.

**‘He wished that factor was alive now so he could show him his bank balance.’**

**‘He wanted to tell someone how well he had done.’**

He wants to brag about his wealth, his visit is more about showing off than reminiscing.

Mr Jackson’s appearance is also described as ‘**competent and hard’** suggesting he is a formidable character.

His **‘black polished car’** suggests wealth and that he is well-kept and image is important to him.

Mr Jackson also states that the he was **‘treated like a black’** suggesting that he is racist and feels like black people deserve lesser treatmentthan white people do.

The actions of Mr Jamieson, who was a neighbour of the Jacksons when they lived in Glasgow, sintroduces the theme of domestic violence.

‘**He would walk like a victorious gladiator up the stairs…then start a fight with his wife.’**

He is portrayed as a violent man who tries to dominate his wife who must make up excuses to her neighbours to disguise the truth about her husband’s mistreatment of her.

**Mother and Son;**

John is hard-working as he sends his ‘**afternoon in the fields’** working even though he finds it tedious and boring.

John accepts his mother’s insults and continues to provide for her even though she is constantly belittling him.

**‘She snapped pettishly…’**

**‘You’d be no good in a job’**

His mother is bitter towards John and his self-worth is slowly eroded by his mother’s constant verbal attacks.

**‘…it was in your family but not in ours’**

She does not see her son as part of her family and constantly undermines him yet he still continues to stay with her. His mother has deprived him of his own freedom by allowing him to believe that he is worthless.

**‘Which hardened into a wall beyond which he could not go through.’**

This suggests there is an emotional barrier that John can’t pass through suggesting he doesn’t fit in.

‘**Then they get together and laugh at me.’**

John is portrayed to be an outsider. Crichton Smith creates sympathy for him as he does not have any friends and is laughed at by the other boys.

**‘He seldom felt his body tired: it was always his mind’**

John is drained and mentally exhausted due to his mother who gets under his skin.

**‘His weakness was pitiful’**

John’s weakness is that he is not able to stand up to his mother and leave her.

**‘…the last dominance had long faded…’**

John has lost control of his freedom due to his mother’s dominance over him. She is the overriding one in the relationship yet she relies on John’s hard-work.

**The Red Door;**

Murdo is also portrayed as an outsider by Crichton Smith as he is different from the rest of the village which is shown when he discovers his newly painted red door.

‘**Murdo had never in his life done anything unusual.’**

Murdo has always been mundane and conformed to fit in as he wants to please everyone.

**‘He felt it necessary that he should be as like the other villagers as possible.’**

‘**He was liked by everybody since he didn’t offend anyone by gossiping…’**Murdo’s conformity has come at the expense of his happiness which he has sacrificed.

Murdo cares excessively about what the other villagers think of him.

**‘What would the neighbours say about it, he wondered.’**

Murdo begins to change due to his newly painted red door which allows him to realise that he is unhappy with his current boring life.

‘**He recognised that the village would wake to a new morning.’**

He has always allowed people to dominate his actions.

**‘If they think I should go to church, I go to church. If they want me to cut peats for them, I do.’**

**‘I have never…been myself.’**

Murdo realises how unhappy he is. He does not like living by himself and is lonely because he is bachelor as he has remained unmarried by choice.

**’He didn’t like eating alone, he didn’t like sitting in the house alone, he didn’t like having none who belonged to him…’**

The Red Door symbolises confidence and the return of Murdo’s individuality and how he wants to be viewed.

**‘The door seemed to him to have its own courage.’**

**‘It was foreign and confident.’**

Murdo realises that he has been pretending to be something that he was not in order to fit in and be accepted by the other members of the village.

**‘And perhaps he had never really belonged to the village.’**

**The Telegram;**

The elder is viewed to have power and takes his position seriously.

**‘He walked in a stately dignified manner.’**

The elder is seen to be a quiet and reserved character who does not involve himself with the rest of the village, except to deliver the telegrams.

**‘He was a stiff, quiet man who kept himself to himself…’**