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English 10

Response Paper

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“The Veldt,” by Ray Bradbury, is a short story told in the third person from the perspective of an outside narrator. Two children, Peter and Wendy, use technology in their Hi-Tech house to plot against their spoiling parents. Such a terrible crime, patricide, occurs in a virtual playroom with interactive walls. It is in this room that Peter and Wendy reenact several times the killing of their parents by means of an African veldt filled with carnivorous animals. Peter and Wendy decide to execute their plot when their parents threaten to take away their most prized piece of technology.

A literary technique used quite often in “The Veldt,” is foreshadowing. Peter and Wendy’s parents are awakened by familiar screams which turn out to be their own. George and Lydia Hadley, Peter and Wendy’s parents, also find an old wallet of George’s that is mangled and covered in saliva. “The Veldt” uses allusions heavily with references back to The Wizard of Oz, Dr. Doolittle, and most relevant Peter Pan and Wendy, who live in a fairytale world with no parents.

I find myself quite intrigued over the hidden implication in “The Veldt,” that technology can influence one in such dark ways. This story shocks me with the idea that two children can kill their parents with no feelings except that of relief. I am finding myself unable to find any relation to the two children except a sharp feeling of indifference. As I try to imagine myself committing patricide I am unable to finish this dark and demonic thought time and time again, and my thoughts never cease to fall upon the same question, “Are there roots to the madness or are there just people born so cruel and inhumane?” This makes me wonder, “What is more powerful? Nature or nurture?”

