

Haley Duran

Giselle Millan

Period-½

## The Little Prince

*Le Petit Prince*, is a book loved by most people around the world. Since the day it was written, its meaning is still a mystery to the world. *Le Petit Prince*, also known as, *The Little Prince*, is a fictional story written by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. The novel is about a little prince who comes to explore Earth and on the way encounters a pilot who is stranded on a desert. During this, the Pilot tells the story of the Little Prince where he meets other people on other asteroids and a snake, train conductor, and fox on Earth. He learns many important lessons throughout his travels. One article that relates to some of those lessons is “Descartes: ‘I Think, Therefore I Am’”, which is written by Rene Descartes. *The Little Prince* discusses the universal theme that relationships are powerful, by exploring this truth in chapter 21 through the impact of relationships, parallels made to Descartes’ theories on feelings, and the symbolism of the rose.

First of all, the universal theme that relationships are powerful is explored in chapter 21 through impact of relationships. During this chapter the Little Prince notices how relationships are powerful. In chapter 21 it says, “For me you’re only a little boy just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you have no need of me, either. For you, I’m only a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, we’ll need each other. You’ll be the only boy in the world for me. I’ll be the only fox in the world for you...” (Saint-Exupéry, 59). The Little Prince may see many foxes, but only one will be unique to him. Like many of us, we can have a special object, and if there is

a million of them, only one can be special and unique. That one that is special and unique, which is caused by a relationship, makes an impact. A different example is how on chapter 21 the Little Prince states, "You're lovely, but you're empty," he went on. "One couldn't die for you. Of course, an ordinary passerby would think my rose looked just like you. But my rose all on her own, is more important than all of you together, since she's the one I've watered. Since she's the one I put under glass. Since she's the one I sheltered behind a screen. (except the two or three for butterflies). Since she's the one I listened to when she complained, or when she boasted, or even sometimes when she said nothing at all. Since she's my rose" (Saint-Exupéry, 63). Here it shows how the Little Prince cares for a rose, which many people would consider weird and maybe useless, he would do anything to protect his rose. The impact of that feeling is very strong between them and that impact can be seen by others, meaning the other roses the Little Prince has met on his journey. In summary, the universal theme that relationships are powerful is explored in chapter 21 through impact of relationships, but there are other ways that shows relationships are powerful, including parallel with Descartes' philosophy.

Second of all, the universal theme that relationships are powerful is explored in chapter 21 through parallel made to Descartes' theories on feelings. Rene Descartes was a French philosopher and mathematician who came up with the famous phrase "I think, therefore I am", which referred to the idea of existentialism and rational doubt. In "Descartes: 'I Think, Therefore I Am'", it states, "Let it be so; still it is at least quite certain that it seems to me that I see light, that I hear noise and that I feel heat. That cannot be false; properly speaking it is what is in me called feeling; and used in this precise sense that is no other thing than thinking..." (Descartes). Feeling is like thinking. It is an irrefutable truth, which cannot be denied. Relationships are just like feeling, so relationships must be an irrefutable truth. Since relationships are an irrefutable truth, they are powerful. Descartes also explains, "[W]hen looking from a

window and saying I see men who pass in the street, I really do not see them, but infer that what I see is men . . . And yet what do I see from the window but hats and coats which may cover automatic machines? Yet I judge these to be men . . . by the faculty of judgment which rests in my mind, I comprehend that which I believed I saw with my eyes” (Descartes). Inferring is perceiving, which is like thinking and since thinking is like feeling, inferring is just like feeling. Perceiving is an irrefutable truth just as feeling is. Appearance is just what people perceive with their mind. As for the Little Prince and the rose, many people may see the rose as just an object to admire, but from there on nothing else. Unlike the Little Prince who sees the rose as an important item with a lot of value. The relationship between appearance is powerful. To sum up, the universal theme that relationships are powerful is explored in chapter 21 through parallel made to Descartes’ theories on feelings, but there are other ways that shows relationships are powerful, including symbolism with the fox’s words.

Third of all, the universal theme that relationships are powerful is explored in chapter 21 through symbolism of the rose. In the chapter, the fox vocalizes many of his thoughts through symbolism. One way is how the Little Prince perceives the rose as an object of affection. As it states in the chapter, “You’re lovely, but you’re empty” (Saint-Exupéry, 63). The Roses (The Prince was referring to the Roses) may be a beautiful sight but they have no purpose, unlike his rose. His rose on the other had has a purpose because someone cares for “her” and is not just a beautiful decoration to be admired. The word “empty” in context means that the roses have beauty on the outside, but they are not the same and they have nothing to give to the Little Prince and themselves on the inside. Another example is of how the Fox states “One sees clearly only with the heart.” (Saint-Exupéry, 63) Feelings that a person can not see is the most important. For example friendship and love, those are two examples of “essential” things that the heart sees but not the eyes, because it is an invisible force. They can only be felt by the ones

who share a relationship with one another just like the rose and the Little Prince. In all, these ideas are how chapter 21 explored how relationships are powerful through symbolism of the rose.

In conclusion, relationships are influential. In chapter 21 relationships are powerful, the universal theme, is analyzed through impact, parallel, and symbolism. This is significant because relationships are apart of our everyday lives. We all have some kind of relationship with someone else. The book really puts how powerful relationships are and how it can impact our lives into perspective. Relationships are symbolic and can stand for other meanings just like the rose and the Little Prince. This subject can relate to so many other pieces of works, so having many pieces really shows how important and significant this subject really is.

#### Works Cited

Saint-Exupéry, Antoine. *The Little Prince*. Mariner Mifflin Harcourt, 1971

Descartes, René. 1637. "Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason, and Seeking Truth in the Sciences." 1637, 19–20.

Descartes, René. "Meditations On First Philosophy." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1911, 14–17.