

# Tina

In the short story "Ghost coat" by Susi Lovell shows that unconditional love is priceless. Edie's grandmother had a fur coat, that she absolutely adored. When she passed away, Edie's mother made her put it in her closet. Despite the fact that Edie is a vegetarian and dislikes the coat. Edie tries selling the coat at the beginning for 400\$. Eventually this price goes down as no one is calling to buy the coat. "New price [...] just as for me." (2) all the way to, "Announcement [...] Edie, 433-218-7659" (5) This is the point where Edie decides to not sell the coat. Rather than just give it away to an animal shelter for some racoons.

This helps show that unconditional love is priceless because Edie's grandmother loved that coat so much that when she ends up giving it away there is no price on it. Like when Edie's grandmother told Edie's mother to become a doctor. She was showing unconditional love.

I think the author's world view is an optimistic world view. Because, throughout the story, Edie never gives up on trying to sell that coat. And when she finally does get rid of it, she's happy.

The author uses some interesting techniques such as, imagery. "With tall windows all along one wall so when you go in you feel blasted with light." (4) This helps the readers to imagine (see) what the painting studio is like. "I can hardly breathe because my whole room smells of Lily of the Valley." (5) these two quotes help set a mood, a calming mood for the readers.

"They give me a very uncomfortable feeling like an allergic reaction. It's as though the coat is a live animal and not dead at all" (4). It's like she's saying that her grandmother could still be alive, only in spirit through the coat.

Another interesting technique the author uses is irony. "I have to make sure [...] I can't just sell it to anyone. (2) this is ironic because in the end she not only 1) doesn't sell the coat, but 2) gives the coat away to an animal shelter (racoons). Another ironic moment in this short story is, "I am a vegetarian. I could never wear a coat made from the skin of a dead animal." (2) this is ironic because at the end of the short story, the man on the bus says "Racoons? [...] shoot the lot of them." (5) this is ironic because Edie is against that sort of thing.

I can connect this short story to another short story called, "A private talk with Holly" because in that short story the father learns that his daughter rather go to college than community college and he realizes that he has to let her go eventually to live her own life. Like Edie's mom did when her grandmother tried to make her become a doctor. Instead Edie's mother became her own person and an Artist. Her mother is trying to teach/show her how to become her own person. But no matter what unconditional love is priceless.

# Gene

In the short story "Ghost Coat" by Susi Lovell, the author shows that "overtime, people want to become their own independent person." For example, there's the mother who is very brave, but of a rebel, liked to break the rules; different, she had the guts,...ect. Then there's the grandmother. She's a lady, strict, followed the rules; got looked at, was proper but most of all impressive "It looked extremely elegant on Grandmother.. p.2 " She looked amazing and elegant like a lady and made sure her children and grand children did so too. "She impressed everyone, even Monsieru Lacombe in the duplex next door. "'now, there's what I call a proper lady'", he'd say .. p.3" "Grandmother was a lady. She knew all about charm and grace and the proper way to do things so that you could go anywhere in the world and be appreciated by people of taste. ' (3)". The grandmother was truly amazing and a proper lady. But her daughter was different. "I want to be just like her. Nothing every frightens her. She'd even lean back on the sofa, and put her feet up on the coffee table and take long drags on her cigarette not worrying that my grandmother was sitting right across from her, looking daggers (p.4)" Her daughter was the opposite. The mother have had enough of living as her mother made her live so now that she's old enough, she's her own independent person and her daughter wishes she was too. "Mother said if I had any sense I'd stop worrying and just do whatever I wanted. High time, she said, I become my own person. Mother is big on becoming one's own person." "I'll be the only one in a skirt". No one I knew wore skirts like the one Grandmother had given me to make up for the jeans; p. (3) the mother is telling her daughter that she needs to be her own person. She's saying how when she was young her mother controlled her life, but she's saying that with her she can stand up and do whatever she wants and be her own person.

She's selling the coat because she wants to be an independent person and move on with her life. That's how the title connects to the theme. The reason its "Ghost coat" is because it was a great value item to their grandmother and it symbolizes her and the coat smells like her. "the coat smells a little of Lily of the Valley because of Grandmother (p.2)". "I have to make sure I'm seliing Grandmothers coat to the right person. I can't sell it to just anyone (p.2)". They respect the coat as much as they respected her, just as she taught them. It's called "ghost coat" because when she puts the coat in her closet she sees 2 red eyes looking at her. "I know there aren't really little eyes in the coat, but even so ...(p.2)". I think the worldview is realistic. Its normal, after somebody does they take care of their stuff, value it and become a different person. I, myself, lost a family member and have changed because of that so I'd say the worldview is realistic because once you've read it you get the impact as something real because many people go through it after loosing a loved one.

I think the author uses many interesting techniques in the short story. Firstly, I think the author uses symbolism in the short story. She uses the fur coat as a symbol for the grandmother. They are both very elegant and looked at for and that's why she's trying to sell the coat To get rid of the Grandmother's presence, because with the coat around, that's all she feels is her. "I can hardly breath because my whole room smells of Lily of the valley. That's how I always know Grandmother is coming so I've tidied my room, cleaned my hairbrush and put it away, and am looking for a new place to hide my holey jeans" (p.5). The element that is getting enhanced is the theme. It's saying (giving( a message that the grandmother is still there. But she doesn't want that. She wants to become a independent person and move on.

Another technique the author uses is repetition. They keep repeating that she needs to sell the coat, so she keeps on bringing the price down and keeps repeating how it needs to go. The starting price was 300\$ and it went all the way down to 50\$. "300\$, new price for grandmothers fur coat! " after she keep saying how no one would call so she put the price to 50\$. "Grandmothers fur coat must go, 50\$ p. (4)". "I dont understand why no one has called yet. Mr. Zedec said plenty of people have read my add...(p.4)". They also repeat the fact taht mother is now a independent person and how hard Grandmother is on everyone but how amazing she truly is. The element it enhances is the theme because it shows she wants to be independent.

I think that the story "Ghost Coat" by Susi Lovell connects to the novel "The catcher in the rye" by \_\_\_\_\_ . I think they connect because she is still having a hard time over her grandmother and that reminds me of the boy in the catcher in the rye who lost his little brother. He had a very hard time and they both value something that represents the loved ones they lost. In the short story "Ghoast Coat" she uses the coat that represents her grandmother and in the "Catcher in the rye" he uses his little brothers baseball glove/mit that had the poetry written all over it. They both value these objects in order to remember their loved one.

I think the short story is accesibile and relevent. It is something anyone goes through after loosing a loved one who was a little over-controlling. The person has been doing everything they asked all those years so when they pass away, they change, and sometimes even become someone very different. Some people become a little more/less self-confident or trust less/more or sometimes even become more or less independent as in this case where she wants to be her own person because her Grandmother was a little strict and she sees that her mother became her own person and even told her to become her own person. I think just about anyone could understand this.

# Linda

The short story "Ghost Coat" by Susi Lovell, is about a young girl, Edie, affected by her grandmothers death. The story has deep profound truths once dissected.

The meaning of the story revolves around respecting yourself, your morals, and your values. Eddie is conflicted because she wants to abide by her grandmothers wishes, but also wants to be her own person. Similarly, its clear that the mother has also been through this dilemma but chose to be herself, which is apparent in this quote: "When Mother left school, Grandmother had wanted her to become a doctor or better still a lawyer but mother wanted to be an artist." A big clue in dissecting the meaning comes from the mother saying "You dont have to do everything your grandmother tells you." and the quote "Mother is big on becoming one's own person." The only reason she would feel so strongly on being your own person would be if she struggled with that herself, no doubt due to her grandmothers influence. In relation to the title, the coat actually is a ghost haunting Edie. Edie doesn't want to disappoint her dead grandmother by selling the coat for less than its worth but after time Edie feels pressure to get rid of the haunting coat and gives it away to help a raccoon family. Ultimately, this coincides with the meaning because Edie, as a vegetarian, most likely cares for animals, therefore using the coat in a meaningful way in her opinion, despite what other people might think (For example, the man on the bus disgusted by raccoons.)

My personal reaction to the story was that I was somewhat confused at the seemingly random information thrown in with the story, however I found that once pieced together, it makes more sense. The theme, mourning a loved one, is easily relatable and the meaning is very relevant in todays society, an issue faced by many young people. The unique storytelling where Edie depicted what was happening to the coat whereas the rest was Edie retelling her past to give us some information about each of the characters, made the story fun and easy to follow.

The story parallels todays society in which there seems to always be an issue regarding modern ideas versus old-fashioned ones. As mentioned previously, the story was easily relatable because many people must face or live up to their parents or grandparents expectations. The story shows us an alternative, however, one definitely more appreciative and helpful which is to be your own person. This truth cannot be stressed enough.

Ultimately, the vivid contrast between two ideals is the driving force behind the meaning, one that should be preached among all people, young and old.

# Teddy

"Ghost Coat," by Susi Lovell, is a short story about getting rid of the past and moving on. The fur coat, Grandmother's fur coat, seems to remain alive for most of the story, suggesting that it is the continuation of Grandmother's life. "Ghost" in the title refers to the Grandmother's Ghost, a lingering essence of her being left behind after death in the coat. The "eyes" that Edie sees in the coat through the closet door are Grandmother's "eyes," watching her, judging her, telling Edie to be a proper lady. They are also the eyes of the Russian Wolf or rabbits or racoons whose fur makes up the coat. Being a vegetarian, I think Edie sees more the lives of the animals in the coat, and less the coat as one's rightful possession. This contributes to the sense that the coat is alive, and not really under Edie's control. For me, as a reader, this was an uncomfortable realization, but one that I understood a lot better looking at Grandmother's imposing legacy.

It's clear that Grandmother was a very caring woman who wanted the best for her children and grandchildren. She wanted Mother to become a doctor or lawyer, well-regarded, successful professions. But the problem is Grandmother's ideas are too strongly imposed for her daughter to accept them and become independent. Mother becomes an artist anyway, which shows a rift between the two women – one of tradition and class – the other of creativity and expression. This same struggle shows up in Edie: her grandmother telling her to be proper, but herself and the people around her – classmates, her mother – show her that's ridiculous and dated. Edie tries to please everyone: wearing ripped jeans to fit in at school, but hiding them when her grandmother visits. She admires her mother, and starts thinking in terms of paintings – when visiting the raccoons – like her mother would. She also likes her mother's idea of "becoming one's own person," but she is so afraid to displease that she become the sum of the influences she is subject to. In this way, Grandmother, and by extension her fur coat, is inhibiting Edie's development to independence: by reducing growing up to a series of choices, to conform to tradition or to style. So, although Grandmother wants the best for Edie, she is actually holding her back.

This is also shown through Mother's need to hide her vulnerability. Edie admires her mom because she appears cool and strong, but this really is not the case. I imagine classy Grandmother did not have a lot of patience for crying and vulnerability, so Mother had to learn to hide it, or express it elsewhere. Surely she couldn't confess her problems to her mother, the very source of her problems! So Mother became an artist to express her weakness. The episode of crying over the fur coat showed an attachment to Grandmother, and denying the crying showed the need to hide this sadness. Her paintings featured "languid" ladies, meaning weak, lazy, and flowing, and the soft colours flooding into each other show lethargy and weakness she cannot express directly to the world – that's why she needs her alone time, to cry in the solitude of peace and silence.

Mother's need to hide her vulnerability shows that Grandmother did not accept who she was and that Grandmother does the same to Edie. It is shown that Edie needs to get rid of her coat because Grandmother is still watching her. The smell of Lily of the Valley, her grandmother's smell, causes her to clean her room and hide her jeans. As long as Edie has the coat, Grandmother is exerting her influence on her. Mother is also shown to need to get rid of the coat. When Edie gives her 3 reasons, she mentions Mother as a key part of all of them. Mother can't fit the coat in her wardrobe. Mother says the coat is made from many dead animals (is Grandmother one of them?), Mother hasn't gotten my closet door fixed. Also the fact that Edie says Mother could fit the coat in her closet shows that Mother could make

an effort to keep it, but she's not. This is because the coat is the same thing for her as it is for Edie, the imposing legacy of Grandmother hanging around, even after Grandmother has passed.

Edie's notices showing the declining coat price represent her increasing desperation to get rid of it and the coat's decrease in value. Edie is desperate to get rid of it because she hates being watched and judged by Grandmother's (coat's) eyes in the closet. The coat decreases in value because Grandmother's ideas of class are becoming less and less a part of Edie's life. Edie is done with those ridiculous, out-of-date ideas of what a girl should wear and do, which makes the coat, the embodiment of those ideas, seem just as ridiculous... That's why she doesn't respond to M. Lacombe saying "You'll treasure the memories," she doesn't agree. That's why she says, "most people find lily of the valley a very pleasant sweet smell," she's not most people. Her Grandmother's legacy is oppressive and she does not enjoy at all that the coat continues to express it. The fact that Edie becomes increasingly candid in her notices show her desperation and her childlike nature. They also show that she sees more and more the painful legacy of the coat than its beauty as a product.

In society and in our lives, there are times when we must move on, and be free from past legacies. Death of a loved one, end of a romantic relationship, and changes of people in power are all examples. Ghost coat shows us we need to destroy all the traces of harmful past people to be fully ourselves: deleting photos with an ex, rediscovering our own passions and interests, and undoing bad policies that left a harmful reputation. Ghost coat, by making us confused and awkward about the living nature of the fur coat, shows that sometimes the harmful legacy is contained in objects that nobody wants to take, and we have to be completely determined to get rid of them, or else they will scour our present. I felt liberated, like Edie must have, when she finally got rid of the coat, a liberation generated by the joy of baby raccoons. This liberty feeling is meant to parallel the joy of being free from damaging past influences, and it worked.

One final idea is that sometimes things have to go from dust, to their lifeform, and back to dust again. Human bodies are this way – we can't sell our body to someone else when we die (yet) because we've used it and put our legacy into it. The same goes for Grandmother's coat. It is her legacy, nobody else can wear it. The fact that the coat started off as possibly living raccoons and at the end of this story goes back to living raccoons symbolizes this "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" idea. Nobody will use the coat after the raccoons; it is at the end of its life. The guy on the bus that wants to shoot the raccoons shows that soon the coat will be dispatched, thrown out, and the world will be free from its legacy. And someday the same will happen to every one of us.

The shock ending of the story shows how shocking this realization can be, but also how undeniably true it is.

# Gayle

The Ghost Coat may not seem very meaningful at first, but once you start seeing things, you will truly understand the story. Obviously it's not just about some coat to be sold, neither is it simply the grandmother's coat. The true nature of this coat is what holds back Edie so much.

The grey-furred coat is an obstacle throughout the text and it seems to have an amplified effect over the course of the story. In this story there is the mother, the grandmother, and Edie. The grandmother has a very formal and strict lady-like behaviour, whereas the mother has a more rebellious independent behaviour. Between those two we have Edie, which has always been between these two odds. Edie very much aspires to be like her mother, yet she is obviously educated-by and acting as her grandmother, for example: the skirt, the dinner table, the hair brush, etc. She never could be like her mother because her grandmother had too big of an influence. One may believe that when the Grandmother died she could have been free of that grasp, but not yet. The fur coat is a symbol but is like the "ghost" of the grandmother, The coat has a big influence just like the grandmother. Edie is desperately in search of who she is, and she is not her grandma. The fact of being like her grandma is what holds her away from her mother and prevents her from being like her. The mother makes her keep the coat because she learned to separate from the grandmother, and become her own self, which is what Edie might be truly seeing in trying to be like her mom, have independence. The coat is therefore the main antagonist in this story. Often we are educated to become what others want us to be, but once you break the chains from these people and their visions, you will have found the key to happiness. Once Edie got rid of the coat, she probably could become herself and disregard her grandmother's ways since her "presence" through the coat was finally gone.

Symbolism throughout the text was abundantly present. First of all the coat was obviously a representation of the grandmother, it was as if it were her. Then the smell of the coat was symbolizing who the grandmother was in the room; as a smell fills in the room, the presence did the same. So as she says she had tidied her room, cleared the hairbrush and hid her jeans. She did this just as she did when the grandmother was around, proving that the smell from the coat was her. Another symbol is that the mother has a full closet with closed doors and she does not want the coat whereas Edie's closet has the coat in and broken doors. This demonstrates that the mother has closed herself from the grandma's influence whereas as long as Edie has the coat (the Grandmother's authority), the doors will be broken open and she will be prisoner to the grandmother. Through this opening she said often that eyes were staring at her, but these were not really symbol of the dead animal but were in fact the grandma staring at her and watching her actions. She could still impose her ways, which made it more and more obvious for Edie to get rid of the coat. The last symbol is more subtle but yet present. At the end she gives the coat to a baby racoon and says that maybe it feels it is it's mother. I think that it symbolises Edie that can finally be close to her mother as the baby racoon was with the coat. The woman at Fur2Fur then says that it is an animal and must live a racoon life and be freed later, just like Edie who will finally find her own way. She will be close to her mother but then will make her own way.

All that symbolism is what makes this short text so good. At first it seems rather boring, but once you see the deep meaning, then you understand certain aspects you did not catch, and slowly the symbols pop-up. Then you can get a real understanding of the story and this is how a great short story should be. You don't need to relate to it for it to be good, all you need is to see more than the story's plot, such as the hidden secrets and the reasons why. As in Ghost Coat.