

Regeneration of Natural Life

Kim Stafford's purpose in writing "The Barn and the Bee's" is analogous to the story itself.

Stafford demonstrates to the reader his fine craftsmanship and the love of the process creating a rich and vibrant essay that mirrors the work that went into creating the barn in the story. Regeneration is a reoccurring theme throughout the essay. From a steaming pile of manure in the back seat, to the return of the bees, blackberry blossoms, and the rebuilding of the new barn; the essay tells a tale of fertility, and natural regeneration of life. The essay is divided into three main sections with many sub-sections that use physical detail as its primary evidence.

The First section describes the initial exploration of the barn. It begins with the narrator riding in the car with his parents and sees ¹⁰⁷ a sign advertising lumber from the fallen barn. The section ends when the narrator speaks with the owner about collecting the lumber. There are four subsections in the first section. IN the first he is riding with his parents when he discovers the barn has fallen. In the second he explores the fallen wreckage. The third shows his discovery of the beehive. Finally the forth subsection is his conversation with the owner of the barn.

The second section mainly focuses on the narrator gaining knowledge of the barn through exploration of the barn's materials, and conversations he has with visitors to the wreckage. The section ends with a conversation with a young boy who shares the nostalgia of the barn. In the first subsection the narrator carefully removes the beehive. In the second he is visited by the three boys and their father. In the third subsection he is visited by the man with an alligator over his heart, and by the woman who bought the farmhouse. In the fourth subsection the narrator rest and reflects on his work admiring his collection of materials. In the fifth subsection the narrator has a conversation with Peter the

owner of the barn. The sixth subsection is a climactic moment of hard work. The seventh the narrator is visited by the wrecker. The eighth and final subsection is calming and peaceful as life returns and the narrator is visited by the young boy.

The Third section is the rebuilding of the new barn from the old materials. There are two subsections. The first has the narrator loading the wood on his car and reflecting on the wood itself. The final is the actual rebuilding of the new barn.

The narrator is motivated to keep the barn and its lost inhabitants alive. Upon his initial exploration of the barn, Stafford discovers a thriving beehive has fallen among the wreckage. Stafford literally states regeneration when he writes "From one mating flight, one meeting with a drone; she bore children all her life." This sentence illustrates the fertility and a continuation of life within the beehive amidst the wreckage. After exploring the barn Stafford talks to the farmhouse owner who is saddened at the loss of the barn when she states "They finally got it." This shows that they shared a common bond dreading the death of the barn. Stafford plans on taking pieces of this organic treasure to his home to bring life back to the barn and its co-inhabitants.

The second section starts at dawn (that reoccurs later in the essay) with Stafford wearing protective clothing. This section shows Stafford gaining knowledge of the life the barn with physical detail and conversations with visitors of the wreckage. When attempting to reach the beehive Stafford steps on the wrong board which causes alarm within the beehive. Life surges then recedes when he states "I was seeing a mood-change inside a friend's brain, something naked and fair," as the beehive cycles through emotions. Many visitors hope to keep the barn alive as others could care less. All who take some piece of the barn with them to bring back to life for individual reasons. Stafford takes materials and the beehive, the man and his boys take a breathing ventilator cupola, the farmhouse

owner takes mason jars, the man with an alligator over his heart takes barn doors and wheelbarrow, the wrecker takes wood to sell, and the little boy who takes love and knowledge who will repeat Stafford's process beyond the ink of the essay. Before being visited by the boy Stafford writes "The two swallows twittered as they spiraled overhead, and a cricket, undisturbed by the catastrophe, began to chant from somewhere near the fallen barn doors," is the first glimpse of returning life. Soon, natural existence will thrive before the process cycles again.

The final section is the moment of rebirth as Stafford takes the materials and beehive with him to recreate life at the slow careful pace of nature. While building his own barn, Stafford reflects on the woods connection to Mother Nature before it was harvested. This is shown when he writes, "I remembered how these boards stood face-to-face in a forest harvesting nineteenth-century light." This reflection shows Stafford honoring the cycle of life at its historical essence. The final regeneration within the essay takes place as Stafford states, "Soon the blackberry pasture out this window will blossom. Soon the bees, daughters of the bees..." This illustrates the apex of fertility before the cycle of life repeats once again.

From Stafford's initial realization that the barn has fallen to the creation of his own barn, there are numerous examples of evidence throughout the essay that supports a theme of regeneration and the cycle of life. The evidence primarily consists of individual stories and examples. Two examples of regeneration are when Stafford describes "Swallows careening overhead where the eaves had been," and "I would still see a few bees hovering precisely where the combs had been." This shows life after it's been disturbed in a process of change. Later in the essay, the swallow's flight overhead and the bees return reflects the reemergence of nature. Other passages describing the curved boards and the blackberry blossoms portray life as a cyclic process and show evidence of regeneration. Stafford's essay

Not detail?

demonstrates one complete cycle of life with hints of what takes place before and after the essay's timeline. Stafford shows us his carpentry and apiary skills that he obtained before the essay starts. Sharing stories of the barn with the young boy indicates the cycle will repeat itself beyond the words of the essay. Stafford also gives evidence that the barn was created at the slow blooming pace of life stating "My industry was slow. The building inspector told me to hurry." Another clear example of regeneration is the first building inspector retiring, being replaced by a new inspector. This clearly shows a repeated cycle of life that symbiotically occurs within the reconstruction of the barn. Every piece of evidence throughout the essay shares the common theme of regeneration at different stages tying human existence to natural process.

Every sentence in the final paragraph includes physical and statistical evidence. With the new barn finally completed Stafford states "At five a.m. in 1984, I am in the loft. Dust-colored rafters join in marriage above me." The major type of evidence is chronological information ^{Just} and physical detail. Five a.m. is the reoccurrence of dawn, and 1984 indicates it took Stafford Four years to complete his barn, and the rafters are reconnected in marriage as they once were interconnected with the earth. Concluding evidence of physical detail takes place when Stafford ^{says} describes "Soon the blackberry pasture out this window will blossom, soon the bees, daughters of the daughters of the bees I took care of, will winnow out from their white box beyond the pear tree into sunlight." Life has completed once full cycle. The return of the barn, the bees, and the blackberry blossoms all represent future generations of life that are embedded in their natural history.

Stafford's essay is filled with thoughts that connect nature to human existence. Regeneration does not exist as a linear system of balanced harmony. Regeneration exists in a constant state of flux. The purpose of this essay is to connect the reader to their own personal existence among all life and

demonstrate the continuous ebb and flow of the cycle of life. And to show that human haste is bound by the natural world. Thus the author intertwines the natural flow of life into "The Barn and the Bees."