

"Looking at pg.45, how does Faulks foreshadow the devastation and horrors of World War One?"

Page 45 of Sebastian Faulks Birdsong, holds a variety of language technique that foreshadow the horrors of World War One. I will be looking at the way Faulks uses setting/nature, imagery, and descriptive language to capture and signifying what the soldiers were going to experience in the forthcoming war.

Faulks foreshadows the devastation of World War One using setting/nature. An example of this is when he uses a phrase which can be used to describe life in the trenches. "...superfluous decay, the rotting of matter into the turned dug earth with its humid, clinging soil." Which is reality he used to describe the river at the location which they were having a picnic, can be interpreted to describe the conditions in the trenches. The 'superfluous decay' and 'the rotting of matter into the turned and dug earth' can be about the decaying and rotting of the soldiers bodies in the trenches. 'Humid, clinging soil' can also be about the conditions in the trenches, because I know from my own knowledge that trenches were usually really crowded, and it would have been really hot and stuffy for the soldiers at times. 'Clinging soil' could also be about the days when the conditions in the trenches are really wet and the muddy earth 'clings' to the soldiers clothing in the trenches.

Faulks also foreshadows the horrors of World War One using imagery. An example of this is when he describes ways in which soldiers were attacked by the enemy. "air coagulated, thick and choking", which Faulks really used to describe the weather at the picnic trip, could symbolise the effect the mustard gas had on the soldiers when they were attacked. "air coagulated" and "choking" shows this because mustard gas dissolves the lungs and it literally drowns the person, making it hard to breath and making the soldier splutter and 'choke' because of the water.

Faulks also foreshadows the attitudes of the soldiers during World War One using descriptive language. Faulks describes the feelings that were surging through Stephen as he sat next to Madame Azaire, "...the sensation of desire

seemed indistinguishable from an impulse towards death", but this could also be deciphered to describe the desire of the soldiers to want to go to war, "Sensation of desire". The "indistinguishable from an impulse towards death" can also symbolise the attitudes of the soldiers because most soldiers believe that it was normal and right to die for your country. 'Dulce et decorum est Pro Patria mori', it is sweet and fitting to die for your country.

Furthermore, Faulks uses descriptive language to foreshadow the devastation of World War One and the consequences many people would have to face because of the war. "Berard's tongue would decompose into the specks of friable soil" and, "clacking would be stilled", Sebastian Faulks talks about this because of Berard's tendency to talk a lot, but this could also be interpreted to be about the lives of 'ordinary' people that would be lost because of the war. "Reabsorbed by the thirsting roots", this could be about the decomposing of the dead bodies.

In conclusion, Sebastian Faulks uses a variety of language techniques that foreshadow the horrors of World War One. He foreshadows the devastation of World War One using setting/nature; he uses imagery to foreshadow the horrors of World War One; he also foreshadows the attitudes of the soldiers during World War One using descriptive language, and also uses descriptive language to foreshadow the devastation of World War One and the consequences many people would have to face because of the war.