



The Man Who Was Almost a Man

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The Man Who Was Almost a Man Details

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Ian says

A young sharecropper learns that having a gun gives one power, but it does not make one a man. Only responsibility and wisdom can do that. The background of the story is important as were the race relations of the time. The story takes place in Mississippi right after the civil war, when black Americans were freed from slavery only to enter grinding poverty as sharecroppers. Often they would have to work for their same ex-owner. The eponymous character is an angry young man who receives little to no respect and believes that gaining a gun will grant him respect and awe. Afterall, "A gun can kill any man, black or white". The plan ultimately backfires and leads to humiliation. At the end of the story the main character runs away to an uncertain but ill boding fate. This is an excellent short story in that unlike many other coming of age stories of the time, gaining a gun and killing a beast is not shown to be a definitive mark of passage into manhood. Instead we get something a little different and far more profound.

Alex Jameian says

Alex Jameian

This book is interesting. The title had got me wondering, what is meant by a man who was almost a man. It drawn my undivided attention to find out. The main character Dave Saunders, a African american seventeen year old boy who gets a job over his summer break. He works on a plantation plowing fields. At his job the other fieldworkers don't respect him and he is treated unfairly, because of how immature he is. All of the people he work with are white.

David lacks proving and doesn't have nothing to show for it. So he takes action in the wrong direction. Which I find in my own opinion a stupid thing to do and only someone with a mind of a younger person can think of. He wants to own a gun and think this will instantly make him a man. You can't be serious? He takes advantage of it and meets a guy named Joe, the salesman who is a bad influenced sells him the gun even though he is under age. It seemed to me as if he is demanding respect. You have to earn respect to get it, it isn't given to you. Some parenting.

Dave's mother and father Mrs. and Mr. Sauders are somewhat different than each other. His mother is caught between her son's happiness and doing the right thing. The father is the more strict figure. He is violent and seems more concerned at what he wants for Dave. He wants to make the choices for him. Kind of like the stories and films my class discussed. He does whatever he wants in the house to maintain discipline like Troy. I know for me this would be a tough task and very disturbing to focus. If he is to keep up with this, he'll end up just like his father.

If I were in Dave's shoes i'd come up with a better solution and think through what he has planned. It is not a good idea, he is trying to take the easy way out. Thinking that he is making a point, when everyone is really laughing at you.

Dave is a pretender, is what I'd call it. He is more in the situation of running away rather than solving his problem. I learn from experience. His life is based on a whole lie, little does he know that it isn't bringing

nothing but more frustration and stress. He is like a premature adult on the outside, but a little toddler boy inside.

He feels as if since almost his entire life has been based on humiliation, taken as a joke, and hatred, How a lot of insecure people look at life, their is no hope. He has the potential but is not willing to do the right thing. He isn't showing commitment, and is going down a path he can't follow.

His foolishness escalated to an incident where he fired the gun at his boss's mule Jenny and killed it. Here he lies about what happen both the death and where the gun was at. He finally confessed what I would've done from the jump and emptied out the bullets and got rid of the gun then escaped on a train leaving everything behind.

I had to find out the hard way that if you want to be something in life you have to work for it, it is what you make of it, there are obstacles, it takes time, motivation, sacrifices, you can't be impatient if your not ready. That's how I look at it, you have to begin from the bottom, and then work your way up, not skip ahead.

I recommend this to teens who are unsure on how to mature and grow up into a intelligent Adult. This is a lesson if you don't be smart about your decisions, it will only make your life a whole lot harder.

Meg says

"The Man Who Was Almost a Man" is an interesting exploration of the intersection of race and masculinity in a time of more extreme oppression. Its more well-written and humane than some of Wright's other more well-known offerings.

For my part I can't stand the eye-dialect. It's not used ad nauseum like Hurst, but there was enough for me to find it off putting and it elicited more than a few audible groans of frustration. Good introduction to Wright and/or fictional exploration of the oppression of sharecropping.

Mark Sexton says

"A young sharecropper learns that having a gun gives one power, but it does not make one a man. Only responsibility and wisdom can do that." Dave thinks that he does not get the respect he deserves from family and friends. So he decides to buy a gun. He thought it might make people respect him as a real man. Dave is really just trying to show that he is a real man. He hides the gun from his mom and dad. He really needs help to understand that people will start respecting him. Just not in that way. He fires a few shots without looking accidentally hits a mule. He has to hide the gun and he lies to everyone that the mule fell on a rake. This book was mainly the same type of story the whole time with no other plot them Dave trying to get people to see he's a man.

Kelly Danahy says

I'm still thinking this one over. I read it for class so I'm sure my opinion will be changed and deepened, but

for now, I think it brought forth some interesting concepts on race, gender, responsibility, and masculinity; however, it doesn't really serve as entertaining.

Raisi says

Todo iba bien hasta que mataron a la mula.

Amy Jackson says

It was nice. I just really enjoyed how my English teacher always said the title. ;P

Otto Mendoza says

Throughout the story Dave feels as if his manhood is threatened. Being stuck between manhood and boyhood, Dave thinks it is time to move from his boyhood but isn't ready for the responsibility that comes with being a man. Dave has no power over how he's treated and over his own money. Instead of working hard to earn other's respect he thinks owning a gun will give him what he wants. Sadly, he wasn't prepared for the commitment and responsibility that came with it.

Hreedi Dev says

This short story about a 17 year-old African-American, Dave, and his search for finding a gun to gain respect and admiration from his society turns out to be a tragedy. He thinks that a gun will let him escape from the oppression that he faces as being a stereotypical African-American boy who always follows the mundane routines of doing his chores. He wanted to someone bigger and more powerful than that. He wanted to make sure that people were afraid of him and knew better than to mess around with a young adult like him. He wants to become an adult because he thinks that being an adult is the answer to all of the worries of life, instead he realizes after he accidentally shoots and kills his boss's mule, Jenny, that the gun is instead the addition to his worries. But at the end you can notice that he is almost turning out to be a man (which is where the title derives from) because he starts to find independence when he thinks that he should flee from the oppressive society that he currently dwells in. The "moonlight" that he sees ahead is the symbolism of hope and the new path to a happy and successful place where he can be someone that he wants to be without having something or someone pull him back. This coming-of-age story is about independence and how finding your voice through a tragical transition in your life can alter your whole life once and for all.

Athena says

The man who was almost a man was really a boy named Dave Saunders.

Dave worked on a farm for Mr Hawkins, and when he got paid his Ma took his paycheck to use it for the

household. This didn't bother Dave so much except for the fact that he wanted a gun believing he would then be considered a man. Little did Dave know.

He begged his Ma for money for a gun, he is relentless, saying that they didn't have a gun in the house with which Pa could protect them. Against her better judgment Ma finally gives in, but she implores him to be careful.

Let's suffice it to say that once Dave Saunders got the gun he didn't heed his Ma's warning, and he certainly didn't become a man.

Dave Saunders has much in common with another of Wright's protagonist Bigger Thomas who also makes bad and impulsive decisions until he has reached the point of no return.
