

In 'The Money' by Junot Diaz a story about a Dominican boy whose family migrated to a small town in New Jersey. He starts by telling us that his mother didn't have a regular job but to look after him and his siblings, his dad couldn't keep a job therefore they never had a steady flow of cash. The money that the father gave them for necessities was chipped up to save and sent every couple of months to his grandparents in DR by his mother which made their life a bit more harsh since they were already poor. One day coming back from a summer vacation they come home to find out that they have been robbed. The thieves took the money that his mother been saving up along with some other things, the mother being the one that the robbery affected most was mad at the world. Days later the boy was hanging out with his 'friends' explaining to them what just happened to him and his family, he noticed that they were saying all the right things and realized that this so-called 'friends' did it. He comes up with a clever plan to steal back what was stolen from his family and successfully does it, getting back the money that was taken from his mother. It took him a few days to return the money since he was thinking about keeping it but the guilt didn't allow him to do so. He returned the money to his mother expecting to be rewarded but in the end, he got no emotions from his mother.

I'll be using the example questions about the reading to answer which are the following: (in Diaz' "The Money"): At several points in "The Money," the narrator suggests himself be a kind of criminal himself ("in another neighborhood, my ass would have been caught burglarizin"); why does he incriminate himself and what effects does this decision have on the reader? Is the narrator justified in breaking into his friend's house based on the little-to-no real evidence he has of his friend's guilt (all he is going on are the "Raskolnikov glances" he notices

the friend delivering the other friend)? A bit of research might lead us to Poe's "The Purloined Letter" as a similarly structured story: what, then, makes "The Money" similar to and/or different from "The Purloined Letter"?

The reason I believe Junot incriminates himself in the text is for us to have a better understanding of his mind. He knows what he's doing is ultimately wrong, if we didn't know his side of the story we would've said the same thing ourselves. The environment, in this case, plays a big role since he is in a real crime heavy neighborhood. We, humans, adapt to live depending on our environment's conditions maybe this is the way he has adapted to the neighborhood, maybe this is just a revenge plan, or just maybe he knew his 'friend' wasn't going to be honest with him and give the stolen goods back to his family if he asked for it so he decided to ultimately step down to a thieves' level. Ultimately I would've done the same thing if I was in his position. He knew the cops aren't going to listen to just accusations with no evidence, therefore, taking matters into his own hands without thinking of the repercussions. Diaz writes "I asked the main dope to let me use his bathroom (we were in front of his apartment) and while I pretended to piss I unlatched the window. Then we all headed to the park as usual, but I pretended that I'd forgotten something back home. Ran to the dope's apartment, slid open the bathroom window, and in broad daylight wriggled my skinny ass in." showing that he planned to get in his house in a clever way. What I don't understand is why weren't there any people in his friend's apartment? After all it was in the middle of the day then maybe both his parents were working at the time and he had the house alone to himself giving the narrator the time and opportunity to get it swiftly and without any problems.

I do think he is justified for breaking into his friend's house with little to no evidence he had. He was right, wasn't he? I also believe there's more to this than what we see because what if he knew that his friend was into the crime life but never said anything about it? After all, we only know part of the story and if we could've seen the perspective of the friend that did it we would have more answers. The friend most likely told him a lot of personal details too. What I don't understand is why did he keep hanging out with them after knowing the truth? The only answer I have for this is that he wanted to keep a close eye on them so they wouldn't steal again from him. We can compare this to 'The Purloined Letter' by Edgar Allan Poe when detective Dupin goes into the house of the thief to find the letter that the cops couldn't find. We can argue that Dupin was in the thief's apartment too but the only difference between these stories is that in 'The Money' Junot does it the 'illegal' way and Dupin does it through the right channels. Both of them have the right guy that stole the item, yes in 'The Purloined Letter' there's more hard evidence against the thief which is Minister D and Junot just ends up having the right hunch but what difference does it make if in both stories the stolen item goes back to the rightful owner? Morally we can say that Junot didn't have to steal the money back he could've just asked for it back but knowing his friends I highly doubt he would've just given it back.

'The Purloined Letter' by Edgar Allan Poe and 'The Money' by Junot Diaz have a lot of similarities. Both stories' plans succeed, Dupin has a very clever way to solving this simple yet complicated hiding spot that the letter was in which involves a simple kids' even or the odd game. In 'The Money' Junot comes up with the plan of going to his friend's apartment to use the

bathroom, opens the window which he then leaves the apartment to 'hang out' with his friends, makes an excuse saying he forgot something at his house then he goes back to his friend's apartment and enters through the window that he opened. These plans both end up working and they both 'solve' their cases. Diaz writes, "Where the hell did I get these ideas? I have not a clue. I guess I was reading way too much Encyclopedia Brown and the Three Investigators in those days." This tells us that he gets inspiration for his clever plan through some books which in my opinion for a kid his age is incredible to come up with such a plan. Dupin just uses simple kid games and solves a case that dozens couldn't even do that is impressive in itself. What also makes these two stories similar is the thievery aspect of it. They are different too in many ways, in one we are set in Paris in the 1800s and the other in New Jersey in the 21st century. The slang that they choose to use is also different one being New Jersey slang words which many New Yorkers could understand too and the other being french phrases and words which I couldn't relate to that since I don't speak french.