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The short story "The Money" by Junot Diaz, is about a Dominican immigrant in his preteens. It starts off with both his mother and father who are not financially stable, as his mom does not have a permanent job and his father always loses his job. He mentions his mother sends 200 to 300 dollars to his grandparents in the Dominican Republic. They live in a small apartment located in a dangerous neighborhood where people get robbed. One summer they decided to take a vacation as a family, but upon their return they found the front door of their home open. They have seen that their home was messy, and that his mother's savings were all gone including his Dungeons and Dragons hardcovers and a portable radio. His mother began blaming him and his siblings for the robbery thinking they had told any of their friends about the money that they had saved. Later on into the story, Junot mentioned he had been hanging out with a few of his friends which he had told about the robbery that had occurred at his home. At that moment, he started to realize that his friends were the thieves who stole from his house. He came up with a plan in which he would steal his belongings back from his friends. As an excuse to get into his friend's home, he had told him he needed to use the bathroom. Upon entering his house, he had got into his room and stole his belongings back.

While analyzing both events in the text, it is clear that there is a similarity in both robberies which can be interpreted as ironic or maybe even hypocritical. In the text when Junot

and his family return home from their vacation, Junot states, “..Still we took the burglary pretty hard. When you’re a recent immigrant, it’s easy to feel targeted. Like it wasn’t just a couple of assholes that had it in for you but the whole neighborhood-hell, maybe the whole country” (Diaz 2). Junot seems pretty upset about the robbery that had occurred in his home especially his family. This event had led him to express his feelings/thoughts by speaking with his friends about the robbery. “Except that a couple of days later I was moaning about the robbery to these guys I was hanging with at that time...I realized that these two dopes I called my friends had done it. They were shaking their heads, mouthing all the right words, but I could see the way they looked at each other, the Raskolnikov glances. I knew ” (Diaz 2). At that moment his feelings/thoughts had led him to realize that those friends he was hanging out with were the thieves that broke into his home. He refers to “Raskolnikov glances” based on it being a suspicious look that gave their guilt away. “It’s not as if the robbery came as a huge surprise. In our neighborhood, cars and apartments were always getting jacked, and the kid stupid enough to leave a bike unattended for more than a tenth of a second was the kid who was never going to see that bike again. Everybody got hit; no matter who you were, eventually it would be your turn” (Diaz 2). This statement led me to question myself that even if Junot knew the neighborhood well, why would he trust his friends including why his family trusted that the money was safe at home. Junot’s statements provide insight into how he feels about the robbery through which he used that and his common knowledge of the neighborhood he lives in to find out who the thieves were.

Throughout the text, Junot mentions stealing his belongings back. “Now, it wasn’t like I could publicly denounce these dolts or go to the police. That would have been about as useless as

crying” (Diaz 2). This statement led me to raise a question for myself over this text. One being why does Junot not feel the need to contact the police instead of stealing his belongings back? Does he not trust the cops as well? To me, it is ironic how he trusts that his belongings are safe in his home knowing that he lives in a dangerous neighborhood, rather than the cops who could help find the culprits who broke into his home. I believe that the author meant to use this phrase as a way to make the reader assume that the cops are not really present in that neighborhood; which is why it lacks control and gains a negative reputation according to Junot’s description. “..And if mine had been a normal neighborhood this is when the cops would have been called and my ass would have been caught burglarizing” (Diaz 3). Junot’s statement seems to be profiling himself as a criminal. This led me to believe that Junot is a hypocrite as he justifies burglarizing his friend’s house to get his belongings back, but was previously upset about them burglarizing his home. This might change the reader’s views or question the character’s morals as he is doing the same negative action that had made him and his family upset. Although, the readers might congratulate him for stealing his belongings back as a form of revenge for upsetting his family.

It seems that what makes this text unique is the moral ambiguity of the main character. The text starts by showing off the character as a victim to robbery, leading it to him coming off as a criminal by burglarizing his friend's home as a form of revenge for stealing his belongings. Hence, this leads to my assumption where I previously stated above that the main character comes off as ironic and hypocritical in his decision making to recover his belongings. In addition, I find similarities like differences in these two important main events in the text. The similarities being the robbery, and setting. The differences are two perspectives on the reason for

robbery and characters. Furthermore, the author conveyed the actions and ethical/moral boundaries that a reader might have upon reading this text.