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January 15, 2020
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How Steve's relationships majorly affected Steve's life for the better and for the worst. *R M A L B W*
Most people do not understand how simple mistakes could really affect one's life. In the novel *Monster* by Dean Myers, the main character Steve Harmon, is on trial for robbery and murder. During the trial he learns how brutal society truly is and how the courtroom treats people differently when there is diversity present. The relationship between Steve and his father, the prejudice of the courtroom and his lawyer Miss O'Brien both positively and negatively affected Steve. ✓

Steve's father really lost sight of who his son was. Steve States, "*He moved away, and the distance between us seemed to grow bigger and bigger.*" (Myers 280). After the trial his father really distanced himself from Steve. He did this because it was too much for him to handle, having his own child go to jail totally altered his perspective on him. Also, Steve's parents may have blamed themselves for this incident, asking themselves what they did wrong when parenting. This would result in it being very hard to cope with and for them to accept the reality of the situation. By Steve's father leaving Steve felt hurt, because when something is hard parents should be there to be supportive not just leave. Steve says, "*My father is no longer sure of who I am. He doesn't understand me knowing people like King or Bobo or Osvaldo.*" (Myers 281). Steve's father felt as if he did not really know his son anymore. When one loves someone so much, it is hard to believe that they would do anything bad. Especially when they are somebody's child, it may feel like they do not even know you anymore. Steve's father distancing himself affected Steve, but the courtroom is where it all started.

What happened in the courtroom really affected every single one of Steve's relationships. Steve says, *"I hate this place so much. But if I didn't think of the movie, I would go crazy. All they talk about in here is hurting people."* (Myers 49). Being in the courtroom for that long of a time and being on trial really showed Steve how he does not want to live. Steve going through this so young put into perspective that how one little mistake can truly affect your whole entire life. This positively affected Steve because it showed how one little mistake can have huge consequences. Also, this shows how important it is to choose the right group of friends, Steve found himself in a situation where he was guilty by association. What negatively affected Steve was how the jury and judicial system dealt with his case. Steve states, *"I thought you're supposed to be innocent until you're proven guilty"*. (Myers 79). This is when Steve was talking to Miss O'Brien and she spoke the truth about court cases. Since Steve's case does not really guarantee if he is guilty or not the jury based some of his choice on who Steve is. Steve discovers the harsh reality that he will be judged harder because of his color. In today's society people make assumptions off people's colour, especially in court. Miss O'Brien says, *"Your black, your young and you're on trial."* (Myers 79). What O'Brien is trying to tell Steve is that the jury already has made an assumption because of his skin color. This negatively affected Steve because his eyes are now open to the fact that people see him as a criminal because he's black. The courtroom really affected see but his relationship with Miss O'Brien affected him the most.

The relationship between Miss O'Brien and Steve's really affected him before and after the trial. Steve says, *"I remembered Miss O'Brien saying it was her job to make me different in the eyes of the jury."* (Myers 130). Steve felt like Miss O'Brien was the only one who was on his

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side throughout everything. He felt he could trust her because she was honest about the trial, pointing out the racial prejudice he stood against. Steve also felt Miss O'Brien would work her hardest to prove his innocence, because she believed him. When the trial was over Steve states, "when Miss O'Brien looked at me, after we had won the case, what did she see that caused her to turn away? What did she see?" (Myers 281). Steve is left to question whether Miss O'Brien really viewed him as innocent and if she too saw him as a monster. Throughout the case it is obvious that Miss O'Brien was just trying to do her job to win the trial, not actually caring about the outcome of Steve. Miss O'Brien doing this validated that in today's society people do judge you by the way you look.

In conclusion, the relationship between Steve and his father, the prejudice of the courtroom and his lawyer Miss O'Brien both positively and negatively affected Steve. Steve's father distancing himself, the courtroom showing Steve exactly how he does not want to live and Miss O'Brien showing Steve exactly how society sees him, will all affect him later in life. This story should teach everyone that every single choice you make may result in challenging consequences. Also, it shows the huge amount of inequality the world faces and what happened to Steve was inevitable, it was bound to happen.

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Excellent
connection!

Works Cited

Myers, Dean. *Monster*. HarperCollins, 1999.

