The Prison

*Plot summary*

The story explores the life of Tommy; a man trapped in a loveless marriage, a job he despises and a non-existent social life. He is trapped in this lifestyle due to the decisions that he has made in his younger years. Therefore, when Tommy sees a young girl enter the story weekly in order to rob two candy bars, he is keen to warn her against this path. However, despite his best intentions the girl’s secret is still revealed. She is punished and she rejects the parental guidance that Tommy attempts to help her with. He therefore ends the story in the same state of rejection that he begun it.

*Themes*

Actions & Consequences –

* The story can be read on a strictly moral level. Tommy got into criminal trouble in his earlier years & though he escaped prison in the real sense he received his own personal prison for his actions.

Greed –

* All of Tommy’s attempts to be greedy; the liquor store & the slot machines and he is punished accordingly.
* The girl’s greed for the chocolate – despite Tommy’s attempts to stop it – is punished too.

*Tone*

The tone of the piece can be described pessimistic verging on nihilistic due to the cycle of destruction that the story professes.

*Characters*

**Tommy:**

A genuinely nice guy at heart, though his greed and lack of ability to take control eventually lead to all the disappointments in his life. He always aspires to better – through criminal means – and is always let down. He has also only married his wife due to his inability to turn down the offer.

**Rosa**:

We learn very little about her, except that she is violent, anger and plain. We can draw the conclusion that – most likely – like Tommy she is also unhappy.

**Girl**:

Despite Tommy’s best intentions and beliefs the girl is essentially beyond hope and remorse for her theft.