

The Undesirable Truth behind an Imaginary Story



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Are you serious?!?

If someone were to tell ^u the most fascinating story, how far are you willing to believe it? “Everything we hear is an opinion, not a fact. Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth” as said by Marcus Aurelius. ^{Year?} The truth can be very vague because everyone has their own belief of what is real. Whether people choose to believe a story is entirely up to them. Pushing aside the truth is one of the things people do when the truth is hard to ~~digest~~ ^{accept}. The novel *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel takes the readers deep into the complex mind of someone struggling with the truth after going through one of his biggest challenge in life. People have different ways to cope with a tragic situation they are facing or experiencing. Psychological research presents numerous coping strategies such as denial, avoidance and repression. Having said that, can a person actually alter the reality they were looking at and remember an entirely contrasting version? When a person adamantly chooses to remember the side that they want to, it will soon become

the truth to them no matter what the actual facts ^{are} ~~is~~. Pi fabricates the story of the animals because it enables him to conceal the brutality of the story involving humans that he eventually shares. This

can be seen in the way he describes his experience with his mother, the cook and sailor ^{with} at such ease, the distractions he constantly uses to avoid revealing his true experience, and the fact that he tries very hard to convince the investigators about his version of what happened.

Truth can be seen through one’s actions or the way one speaks and it is bound to come out no matter how one tries to hide it. Pi’s behavior and mannerisms show no hesitation when he relays the story of the boat with humans. The investigators refuse ~~s~~ to believe that animals could reside on a boat with a human being let alone one of the most dangerous of animals, a Bengal tiger. Pi tries to convince them that the story is real and what he ~~experienced~~ ^{experiences}, no matter how hard it is to believe, does in fact take place. However, he soon tells another version of his original story, a story without animals but with humans as a substitute. He reveals the story of the cook,

Thesis

These areas should have had novel citations with them.

sailor and his mother with such ease and detail that it is almost as if he is actually with those people on the lifeboat. For instance, Pi describes the murderous way his mother is killed in this version with precise information. “The knife appeared. He raised it in the air. It came down. Next it was up- it was red” (Martel 415). Assuming that Pi makes up the story so that he can satisfy the reporters, he could not have said it without pauses and moments to think. This is where it is

Interesting.

very possible

~~proven~~ that the events that happen with humans is actually the reality and has a high possibility

Good job on using non-opinionated language here.

of taking place after a shipwreck. The article, *Can You Catch a Liar* shows the study of people lying and the signs to spot an untruthful information. Results shows that there is an “increase in time needed to respond” (Proverbio 8) if a person is lying. This proves that Pi’s quick response to

tell an alternative story has a slim chance of being a lie seeing how he tells it quickly and in much detail. The “increase in response time when a person is telling a lie is called the lie effect”

(Proverbio 8). This effect cannot be detected when Pi tells the second version of the story. This same study also shows a “decrease in accuracy due to response conflict and the need to suppress

truthful information” (Proverbio 8). This makes it more difficult to be fluent in relating a certain story. This fact shows that Pi is able to simply tell of the occurrence with humans on the lifeboat

because he does not need to hide any truthful information. In other words, everything he is saying is truly the episode that takes place and he finally confesses. Pi does not show any signs

Well researched and very interesting.

of being extra careful of what he is saying or trying to hide any information from the investigators. ~~The repulsive details of murders that happens on the boat is not something a person~~

are

A bit too opinionated

~~can make up instantly.~~ The antics of the cook and the suffering of the sailor ~~is~~ described in a way

are

that is believable and not conflicting although extremely brutal at the same time. In particular,

“The cook threw himself upon the sailor’s head and before our very eyes scalped him and pulled off his face” (Martel 412). Pi’s attention to detail when relating the human version of the story at

the same time showing no hint of false speech proves that he is not at all hesitant or nervous when relaying the story. Consequently, it ~~proves~~^{gives support} that the story involving people is real and is at the back of his mind all this while.

Society in general exhibits common signs when they provide false information to cover up the facts. Pi uses distractions when speaking with the investigators in the hospital. He uses different ways to either avoid questions that he does not intend to answer or says things that confuses the investigators. This tactic can bewilder the investigators or throw them off track of what they intended to say. Right after Pi completes his story of surviving with animals on a boat for 227 days, Mr. Okamoto immediately admits his disbelief. Pi answers him by saying, “Sorry – these cookies are good but they tend to crumble. I’m amazed. Why not?” (Martel 393). His response is clearly differing from what is the expected answer. He mentions cookies which is a distraction for the investigators. Pi also offers the two Japanese investigators cookies which leads them to rattle on about unrelated topics such as the weather and their visit to Mexico. Pi is actually trying to divert their attention away from their real purpose of discovering the true story of what occurred to the Tsimtsum. Another way Pi distracts them is by uttering long philosophical sentences that baffles the investigators and has them putting all their energy into figuring out what he is trying to voice out. Specifically when he says, “The world isn’t just the way it is. It is how we understand it, no? And in understanding something, we bring something into it, no?” (Martel 405). In addition, Pi constantly answers the two men by using food and even interrupts them when they are talking. The article *Can’t Hide Your Lying Eyes* reveals the tactics people use when they are lying to someone. A person is most likely deceitful when they “try to misdirect you” (Wadman 494). These people “cannot produce in a timely manner the appropriate backup for the data” (Wadman 494). Pi consistently changes the topic to avoid being

A bit opinionated and could have been phrased with a bit more openness to interpretation.

interrogated with more queries from the investigators. Pi sometimes is unwilling to answer questions and this is a sign he is afraid to say the wrong thing or just does not have the answer they are looking for. [Should have made a text citation here for us to see what you are talking about.](#) In other words, it is very difficult to conceal a lie with more lies. In the same way, the article *Tips from a Professional Lie Spotter*, discloses more information about people and false speech. One of the interesting facts here is that people who are lying tend to grab “barrier objects” (McKinnell 1) to feel more secured. This study reveals that when there is nothing between interrogators and the subject, “the deceptive subject will feel exposed and have trouble concentrating” (McKinnell 1). Pi keeps many items with him such as biscuits and bananas. These do not just serve as a distraction but is also something he does to make him feel safe. The food and the figure of speech he uses with the investigators is ultimately to distract and divert their attention so that they are not a hundred percent focused on the interview. These distractions shows that Pi concocted the story of the animals as he is unwilling to answer questions in detail therefore, masking the true account. [Very interesting stuff!](#)

When a person is adamant in proving a fact, he or she will not settle until it is proven. In the beginning of the interview, Pi uses all possible methods to convince them of the alternative that includes animals. After relaying the story of the animals, Pi is bombarded with questions by the two Japanese investigators from the unique but disturbing facts that are revealed in the story. Some of them are the aspect that wild animals could reside on a boat together, a carnivorous island and a fish-eating algae. Everytime they question Pi about a fact, Pi opposes them by asking them about the reasons for them not to believe him in an angry tone. An example of his outrage is, “How can I be calm? You should have seen Richard Parker!” (Martel 400). Still, the investigators repeatedly tells Pi that all the facts in the story are just too hard to believe. Pi then reveals historical facts when he says, “There may very well be feral giraffes and feral hippos

living in Tokyo and a polar bear living freely in Calcutta” (Martel 399). Pi is doing his best to make them believe that even a story so strange can actually take place in real life and is not just a fiction of his imagination. He defends himself strongly with as many facts as possible that can convince the reporters to see ~~eye to eye~~ ^{in-line} with him. When they continue to verify the information with more questions, Pi raises his voice and is clearly agitated. Every judgment the investigators put forward ^{was} ~~refuted~~ by Pi in a harsh way. For instance, the Japanese men insisted that they were just being reasonable when analyzing the story. This one word causes Pi to rebuke their claim by stating that they are missing important points by reasoning about everything. Furthermore, Pi explains that there are many things in the world are highly unlikely, “So is winning the lottery, yet someone always wins” (Martel 401). He is making it clear that although the story of the animals is almost impossible to occur, there is still that small chance for it to occur. The deeper meaning into Pi putting all his energy in convincing the reporters about his story is clearly his way of coping with the real event that occurred which is the story with humans. *The Seven Levels of Lying* states that the fourth level is when “you self-deceive” (Sumner 52). “You now believe the lies that you are telling others. We can lie so effectively that we even lie to ourselves” (Sumner 52). This connects back to the way Pi eventually convinces himself that he is a survivor of 227 days on a life boat with only animals as his companions. According to the book *Personality*, there are various coping strategies that human beings use. The one that Pi is using is the avoidance strategies. People who use these strategies to cope “refuse to believe that it happened” and “take it out on people when they feel angry or depressed” (M. Burger 143). Pi’s dramatic way of persuading the investigators to believe his unlikely story proves that he is hiding a much bigger story, a story that he does not want to recall and prefers to let it fade in the back of his mind. When his methods of convincing the investigators does not ~~bear fruit~~ ^{prove successful}, his anger and

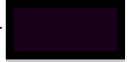
Ugh, cliché!

frustration ~~is~~^{are} clearly visible. All signs that he is avoiding the hard truth. Coping strategies are not always successful in dealing with problems especially ones that leave a ~~huge~~^{deep} emotional scar^s. Research shows that “avoidance strategies may help in the short run” but it only “delays dealing with the problem” (M. Burger 145). Pi is calm after revealing the first version of the story and finds it easy to stick to that. However, he soon feels ~~that it is~~^{the} burdensome~~s~~ to keep up with the questions from the investigators that he divulges~~s~~ in another version of the story. The version that is the true scenario he has been avoiding all this while. Pi opposing every doubt in the investigators mind with such assertiveness shows that he is doing all he can to make them believe that the story of the animals did in fact take place. Consequently, it shows that he is covering up the real version of the event which is too violent for him to want to recollect.

The intent of this essay is to show that the story of the animals is Pi’s imagination to push aside the reality of the events that takes place with humans. This is supported by the arguments that he relays the story with humans easily, he is distracted when answering the reporters about his experience on the boat with animals, and he is doing his best to persuade the reporters in believing the animal version. People may argue that the story of animals can possibly happen in real life and Richard Parker, a tiger can very well live with a human being if tamed properly. However, the version with humans is rationally the story more likely to occur. Pi, Pi’s mother, a cook and a sailor stranded on a life boat together has a higher possibility of occurring compared to Pi, a hyena, an orangutan and a tiger. It is also unlikely that Pi could have made up another version with specific details spontaneously. There is a flow to the story with humans that makes it believable and not contradict reality. One of the big ideas of this book is how human beings in general cope with difficult situations. Some people accept the truth and try to move on with their life no matter how emotionally scarred they are. There are those who prefer to forget about their

Looking back at the whole essay now, I think you should have put your third point first and your last point first. It would have been in sequential order.

To just bluntly state this case doesn't prove you correct ,and the alternate untrue. You should have grounded your proof back in the proof in body language that you already proved in this essay.



problems and move on with life. They come up with all possible ways to make themselves forget including remembering a false reality in hopes that the painful memory will eventually fade as how Pi did. They do not just lie to themselves but constantly lie to everyone around them as they try to heal from the past. However, no matter how much one chooses to forget about a bad memory, one can never fully erase it from the mind. It will eventually come out if the circumstances call for it.

You found some very convincing and pertinent evidence to back-up your claims. Excellent job!



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