
The Inevitability Of Savagery In Lord Of The Flies

Human beings are animals and present animalistic behaviors, though we don't tend to think of ourselves this way. We attempt to organize the world around us, but perhaps we will always end up in a state of chaos no matter what we do. In *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, a group of young boys are stranded on an uninhabited island and are left to govern themselves.

At first, a civilized manner of government is proposed by a leader, Ralph. In a short matter of time, however, a power-hungry child, Jack, emerges as a dictator on the island, destroying every bit of civilization the boys once had. *Lord of the Flies* conveys the evil nature of humans and the boys' descent into savagery through the progression of fear, wickedness, and liberation from the bonds of morality that define civilization.

Throughout the book, fear drives the boys to a state of chaos and savagery. The boys sense an evil presence lurking around them shortly after their arrival on the island. "Either the wandering breezes or perhaps the decline of the sun allowed a little coolness to lie under the trees. The boys felt it and stirred restlessly"(Golding 36). The boys have only been on the Island for a few days at this point, and yet, fear hangs in the air like a disease. As a result of this fear, the boys become delirious and desperate for the illusion of safety, running to Jack for his protection and splitting up. When discussing the beast, Simon says, "Maybe there is a beast....maybe it's only us" (Golding 80). This theory suggests that the boys self-destructing; their fear has pushed them to distrust one another and break up. Simon recognizes that the evil on the island that is haunting the boys does not reside in some foreign creature, but the boys themselves. All the chaos that will follow their journey on the island would have all been preventable, if not for their fear.

Additionally, Simon has an encounter that further embeds an idea in his mind: the idea that wickedness is innate. Simon wanders into the woods to find the head of a pig that Jack had slaughtered on a stick. He hallucinates the pig speaking to him. The pig says that it is the beast that all the boys have been so afraid of and calls itself the Lord of the Flies. It tells Simon, "You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are?" (Golding 130). The beast represents evil and is telling Simon that evil is a part of him, as it is for all humans. The beast goes on to tell Simon that the boys will do better without him. "I'm warning you. I'm going to get angry. D'you see? you're not wanted. Understand? We are going to have fun on this island!.... So don't try it on, my poor misguided boy, or else...we shall do you?"(Golding 144). Chaos can reign free once Simon, who symbolizes goodness, is gone. They can fully embrace their chaotic nature. From his experience with the Lord of the Flies, Simon sees that savagery and chaos is human instinct.

Not only is savagery human instinct, but it is also liberating for the boys to experience. Jack and his "tribe" of savages hold a ritual dance and Ralph and Piggy, who is not a part of this tribe, join in. To their surprise, they were excited to participate. "Piggy and Ralph, under the threat of the sky, found themselves eager to take a place in this demented but partly secure society"(Golding 152). Piggy and Ralph see the allure and liberation of savagery. By becoming savages, they lose themselves and accept a new persona. This displays the idea that through chaos, we are liberated. Unfortunately, this dance turns deadly when Simon comes out of the

forest and the boys believe him to be the beast. They beat him to death. 'There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws' (Golding 153). At this point, the boys have fully immersed themselves in savagery. Readers get to see the disastrous consequences of abandoning civilization. The consequences of becoming savages are brutal, and yet, it still is a liberating experience.

Will our instinctual nature always bring us to a state of savagery and evil? In *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, displays of fear, wickedness, and liberation through savagery convey the idea that humans are innately evil. Both fear and the allure of savagery draw the boys in. This instinct resides within all of us. It is scary to think that humans can be so wild and cruel, but perhaps it is in our nature.

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