

I'm not a bot





























[illegible]



experience must fully be Carl's actions throughout the incident. I was able to follow even the hoof by hoof. I knew everything my love did to wrest the girl from her prison and help her escape her nation. Hearing only fragments of his conversation with the girl, Eva Luna knows him well enough to guess the rest of what he has said to her. Try as he might, Rolf/Carl is unable to rescue the girl from the mud, and in the end can only console her. Eva Luna's emotional connection to him is so strong that, just based on what she sees him doing via TV broadcast, she intuits an almost magical knowledge of the consequences of this experience for Rolf/Carl's emotional life. I, glued to the screen like a fortune-teller to her crystal ball, could tell that something fundamental had changed in him. I knew somehow that during the night his defenses had crumbled and he had given in to grief; finally he was vulnerable. The girl had touched a part of him that he himself had no access to, a part he had never shared with me. Rolf had wanted to console her, but it was Azucena who had given him consolation. From this great geographical distance, Eva Luna recognized the precise moment at which Rolf gave up the fight and surrendered to the torture of watching the girl die. In spite of the distance, Eva Luna experiences herself as having bridged the gap between herself and her lover, feeling herself to be fully experiencing what he and the girl are experiencing together. She says I was with them, three days and two nights, spying on them from the other side of life. However, when Rolf/Carl returns home from this life-changing experience, the geographical distance between the two lovers is finally bridged, but an emotional distance has developed. Eva Luna, addressing Rolf/Carl directly through second-person narrative address, tells him, You are back with me, but you are not the same man. The experience has caused him to emotionally withdraw from his lover, embarking on a voyage deep within himself. Eva Luna remains physically close to him, beside you, waiting for his emotional return to their former intimacy, walking hand in hand. In the final words of the story, she tells him, Beside you, I wait for you to complete the voyage into yourself, for the old wounds to heal. I know that when you return from your nightmares, we shall again walk hand in hand, as before. As in the Prologue, the second-person narrative address to you reaffirms the long-term intimacy between the two lovers, despite this temporary emotional distance And of Clay Are We Created is characterized by a shifting narrative point-of-view and address, which captures the experience of simultaneous intimacy and distance experienced throughout the relationship of the two lovers. The Prologue to the story collection describes a pair of lovers who are so physically and emotionally intimate that their lovemaking allows them the freedom to glimpse absolute solitude, each lost in a blazing chasm, and yet soon return to the far side of that fire, and find themselves in an intimate lovers embrace. The use of second-person address in the prologue/Rolf/Carl addressing his lover directly as you increases the feeling of intimacy between them, as if inviting the reader into the fold of their relationship. The narration of the story And of Clay Are We Created describes the experience of emotional intimacy between the two lovers, despite great geographical distance and contact limited to that of a national television broadcast. The final paragraph describes the lover, returned home from this life-changing experience, to find himself emotionally distant from his life companion, despite their physical proximity. The relationship, however, is one that thrives on such fluctuations between intimacy and distance, be it geographical or emotional, and always maintains the promise of renewed closeness, the assurance that, whatever the current distance between them, we shall again walk hand in hand, as before.Source: Liz Brent, in an essay for Short Stories for Students,Gale Group, 2001.Ruth BeharIn the following excerpt, Behar examines Allendes inspiration for writing And of Clay Are We Created.[This text has been suppressed due to author restrictions][This text has been suppressed due to author restrictions]Source: Ruth Behar, in The House of the Spirits, in The Womens Review of Books,Vol. XIII, No. 2, November, 1995, p. 8.SourcesAllende, Isabel, Prologue to The Stories of Eva Luna,translated by Margaret Sayers Peden, Bantam, 1991, p. 4.Bader, Eleanor J., Review of The Stories of Eva Luna,in Belles Lettres: A Review of Books by Women,Vol. 6, No. 3, Spring, 1991, p. 60.Bernikow, Louise, Review of The Stories of Eva Luna,in Cosmopolitan,Vol. 210, No. 1, January 1991, p. 22.Cryer, Dan, Unlucky in Love in Latin America, in Newsday,January 21, 1991, p. 46.Gautier, Marie-Lise Gazarian, Interviews with Latin American Writers,Dakye Archive Press, 1989, p. 8.Harris, Daniel, Review of The Stories of Eva Luna,in Boston Review,Vol. 16, No. 2, April, 1991, pp. 28-29.Hart, Patricia, BoomTimes-II, in Nation,Vol. 252, No. 9, March 11, 1991, p. 315.Itekkharuddin, Farhat, Writing to Exorcise the Demons [Interview with Allende], in Speaking of the Short Story,edited by Farhat Itekkharuddin, Mary Robberger, and Maurice Leo, University Press of Mississippi, 1997, pp. 1-26; reprinted in Conversations with Isabel Allende,edited by John Rodden, University of Texas Press, 1999, pp. 353-54.Ruta, Suzanne, Lovers and Storytellers, in Womens Review of Books,Vol. 8, No. 9, June, 1991, p. 10.Snell, Marilyn Berlin, The Shaman and the Infidel [Interview with Allende], New Perspectives Quarterly,Vol. 8, Winter, 1991, p. 57.Further ReadingAllende, Isabel, Writing As an Act of Hope, in Paths of Resistance: The Art and Craft of the Political Novel,edited by William Zinsser, Houghton Mifflin, 1989, pp. 39-63.Allende describes the violence, poverty, and beauty of Latin America, and explains that storytelling is the best medium for communicating its truths. I write, she reveals, so that people will love each other more.de Carvalho, Susan, Escrituras y Escritoras:The Artist-Protagonist of Isabel Allende, in Discurso Literario,Vol. 10, No. 1, 1992, pp. 59-67.An essay examining the character of Eva Luna, and how she uses storytelling as a means of self-examination. Although this essay refers to the novel Eva Luna,its insights may be profitably applied to the narrator of And of Clay Are We Created.Leonard, Kathy S., ed., Index to Translated Short Fiction by Latin-American Women in English Language Anthologies,Greenwood, 1997.An excellent guide through the dozens of anthologies that include, as the title indicates, English translations of short stories by Allende, and also for finding available works by her peers.Rodden, John, ed., Conversations with Isabel Allende,University of Texas Press, 1999.An extensive collection of interviews from various literary journals, originally published in English or translated from Spanish, German, and Dutch. The volume includes an index and annotated bibliography.Rojas, Sonia Riquelme, and Edna Aguirre Rehbien, eds., Critical Approaches to Isabel Allendes Novels,Peter Lang, 1991.Although it deals only with Allendes first three novels, this collection reveals the central critical issues in her fiction. The essays are English and in untranslated Spanish. The Introduction, in English, is an excellent overview of the biographical and political sources of Allendes major themes.Shaw, Donald Leslie, The Post-Boom in Spanish American Fiction,State University of New York Press, 1998.An analysis of Latin-American literature produced since the mid-1970s following the Boom, a period that saw an explosion of internationally important works by Latin-American writers. Works written after the Boom tend to be more concerned with contemporary Latin-American society, especially with working-class and middle-class characters. By Dr Oliver Tearle (Loughborough University)And of Clay We Are Created is a short story by the Chilean writer Isabel Allende (born 1942), included in her 1989 collection The Stories of Eva Luna. In the story, a mountain avalanche causes a cataclysm which leads to thousands of deaths. The story follows the attempts of a newscaster who tries to save a thirteen-year-old girl who has become trapped in the mud.Before we offer an analysis of And of Clay We Are Created, it might be worth recapping the plot of Allendes story, which is concerned with death, human connection, and the nature of grief, among other themes. Plot summaryA volcanic eruption and the ensuing mountain avalanche cause vast damage to a village, killing thousands of people when it buries them beneath mud. One girl, named Azucena, clings on for life in a mudpit, and attracts the attention of television news reporters. The first-person narrator of the story describes how her partner, Rolf Carl, is dispatched to report on the avalanche, while the narrator watches her lover report from the scene, live on the television news.Although he is known for his emotional detachment when reporting on the news, Carl seeks to help the girl who is trapped in the quagmire, and aids in the attempt to pull her out of the mud using a rope and a life buoy fastened around her body. However, Azucena tells him that her lower body is trapped in the corpses beneath the mud: the corpses of her brothers and sisters, still clinging to her legs. Carl makes numerous attempts to free Azucena from the mud, but a pump is sent for which can drain the water. However, it wont arrive until the following day, so Carl, at the girls request, stays with her so she is not alone, and they talk. He learns she is thirteen years old and has never been outside her village. He becomes optimistic that she will be all right as he entertains her with stories throughout the night. The narrator, who had often accompanied Carl to the TV studios where he works, goes there to watch him talking to the girl through the night. In the morning, Carl learns that Azucena apparently has a fever, but they cannot treat her as the antibiotics are being saved for cases of gangrene. As the second night of Azucenas imprisonment in the mud arrives, both she and Carl are clearly exhausted from lack of sleep. It is at this point that Carl, who grew up in Austria, begins to recall his childhood in a concentration camp during the Second World War, and how his father used to beat him. He also recalls his sister, Katharina, who was born with learning difficulties and resented by their father. Carl realises that his entire career as a reporter has been an unconscious attempt to keep all of these fears at bay, but now they come flooding back to him. He realises his is Azucena: trapped and fearful, just like her.The next day, the President arrives and speaks to Azucena. Watching on the television, the narrator notices that something has changed in Carl, and he has given in to grief. When Azucena tells him that she has never been loved by any boy, he tells her that he loves her more than he has loved anyone else, and prays that her death will be quick. Although the pump is now on its way, Azucena dies before it arrives, her eyes locked with Carl's.The story ends with the narrator addressing Carl directly, revealing to us that he often watches the footage of Azucena again, looking for something he could have done to save her, but also searching, in some sense, for himself. AnalysisThis story concludes The Stories of Eva Luna: an Arabian Nights-influenced collection in which Eva plays the Scheherazade storyteller figure from the original anthology of Middle-Eastern stories. And of Clay Are We Created ends the collection on a downbeat note, following the death of the girl, Azucena, in the mudslide and the subsequent change that Rolf Carl has undergone in response to the tragedy. And yet in some respects, the story is a positive one. The tragic death of the young girl is marked by a moment of genuine and profound human connection between two unlikely companions: a teenage girl and the adult, male newscaster who had turned up to report on her plight. But in the end, Carl finds that he is unable to maintain his usual emotional detachment and must seek to help her. And although he is ultimately unsuccessful in saving the girls life, he is able to make her feel loved and cared for during her dying days. But And of Clay We Are Created is as much a story about Azucena saving him as it is his attempts to save her. By inadvertently breaking down his emotional barriers which he has artificially put up throughout all of his adult life as a kind of protective mechanism she enables him to reconnect with his true self, and to feel emotions he has not felt in decades. More than this, she makes it possible for him to grieve not just for her, but for his sister, mistreated at the hands of their father, his mother, who was humiliated and robbed of her dignity, and perhaps even for all of humanity: here, the references to the Holocaust and concentration camps make Carls grief both personal and universal at the same time. Can we label Carls emotional response to Azecenas plight an epiphany: that coming to consciousness, or realisation, which characters in modern short stories often experience? Perhaps. Epiphanies in modern fiction are often open to interpretation and analysis: ambiguous in their significance, they can be taken as heartfelt and permanent changes of perspective or (more cynically) as short-lived and even performative shifts in response to an immediate experience, with the implication being that once the immediacy of the experience is past, the character will forget its lessons and revert to their earlier attitudes.In And of Clay We Are Created, we are convinced of the sincerity and profundity of Carls emotional change, despite the fact that we, via his lover Eva, are witnessing the change from the outside. Indeed, Carl is literally on the television, with Eva watching him via a television screen: the other side of life, as she puts it at one point. But even with the two of them separated by the glass of that screen, she can tell that something fundamental had changed in him. Indeed, she sees a new side to him which he had never shared with her. The other side of life is a key phrase in the story, and Allende does much next with the symbolism of the television screen and the news cameras. In the modern age, we are virtually all familiar with the experience of helplessly watching tragedy and disaster unfold on the rolling television news: separated by a screen, we are unable to do anything except watch in horror.Indeed, perhaps the Holocaust was the first really harrowing example of such things being captured on film for the world, and posterity, to see. Allendes story taps into this. And yet she elevates the details above the squalor and horror that surrounds them. Although she appears to point the finger at the bureaucratic barriers which prevent help from reaching Azucena and potentially saving her life (note how that pump was meant to arrive on the second day, but it is delayed, held up by paperwork), she also emphasises the human solidarity and connection which the catastrophe forces between Carl and Azucena. Note how Allende tells us that the two of them flew above the vast swamp of corruption and laments (the literal quagmire of mud which traps Azucena is not the only swamp which oppresses and imprisons us). Indeed, they were both saved from despair, because they had been reminded of the good, the kindness, that individual humans are capable of offering to each other.If the mud and quagmire which traps Azucena is also, then, a symbol for the dirt and corruption which engulfs the whole country (and perhaps all of humankind), then Azucena her flower name, which means lily is the flower in the mud, as Allendes narrator tells us at the moment of the girls death. She is beautiful but also fragile and delicate.The mud is too powerful. And yet all of us are derived from such clay or earth, in one way or another, as the storys title reminds us. The question appears to be how to rise above it. Subscribe to get the latest posts sent to your email. And of Clay Are We Created is part of the collection called The Stories of Eva Luna(1989). Eva Luna is the most famous character created by Isabel Allende, and although she is not named in this short story, Eva Luna is its narrator.And of Clay Are We Created opens with the striking image of a girls head protruding from the mud pit, eyes wide open, calling soundlessly. The girl, namedAzucena, is stranded in the mud pit that happened following avolcanic eruptionthat led to the melting of the ice on the mountain slopes, eventually forming anavalanche. The avalanche has buried entire villages under a load of clay, stones and water and has killed more than twenty thousand people.Rolf Carl, a journalist by profession, is at the spot to report this event. He is usually a verycalm and dispassionate reporter, able to do his job without getting too sentimental or overwhelmed by the events he reports. However, Azucenas plight somehow gets to the core of Rolf and he wades into the mud pit himself in a bid to rescue Azucena. Rolf gets to the task immediately, tying a rope around the girl so the others can pull her out of the pit. But this fails as the girl screams out in pain. The others think that it could be the debris from the crushed house that has kept Azucena stuck in that spot but she insists it is the corpses of herbrothers and sisters.The narrator can feel all calmness slipping away from Rolf as he becomes desperate to find a way to get Azucena out of the pit. He tries everything he can, to no avail. Eventually, he decides that they must have apumpto drain the water. The request for a pump is made but it cannot be arranged anytime soon. The night is a test for Azucena; Rolf helps her drink some coffee to keep the body warm. The coffee works as she seems warmer, and to keep her calm, Rolf tells her of the various adventures he has had in his career as a journalist. Rolf even imagines optimistically how a helicopter will take Azucena to a hospital very soon and he will visit her there.The narrator, Rolf's wife, tries to contact some important people she knows in order to arrange for a pump to be sent to the spot immediately but she obtains onlyvague promises. This entire episode takes a toll on the narrator also and she can feel Rolf's frustration, his impotence. The natural disaster has caused utter chaos in the places it has affected and the media has appropriated Azucena, bestowing on her thepathetic responsibilityof embodying the horror of what has happened. Ironically, none can arrange a pump in order to actually rescue her.Azucena starts vomiting out food now. A doctor and a priest come to visit her. Meanwhile, Azucena has attractedwide media coverage. Night comes and Rolf sings old Austrian folk songs to help Azucena sleep. Both of them are exhausted. Rolf starts ruminating about histraumatic past, involving theHolocaust, an abusive father, and his sisterKatharina, among other things. Both he and his sister were victims of their fathers abuse and Rolf starts thinking about his sisters death.The next day, the President of the country comes to visit Azucena. He says he will ensure that a pump is sent here at the earliest and yet, nothing happens. Meanwhile, the narrator can feel there is some change in Rolf, and both Rolf and Azucena have nowabandoned all hopesof rescue. Rolf kisses the little girls forehead and prays that she does not have to suffer too much. The narrator ends by pondering how Rolf is no longer the same man but hopes that this wound will heal in time and that they shall again walk hand in hand, as before.And of Clay Are We Created AnalysisTHEMEThe theme ofhumans versus natureis very prominent in the story. The story is set inSouth Americanregion devastated by an avalanche following a volcanic eruption. Throughout imagery, the author brings out theimmense power of natureand its sheer indifference to humans. The narrator reports how on a fateful Wednesday night, a prolonged roar announced the end of the world, and walls of snow broke loose, rolling in an avalanche of clay, stones, and water that descended on the villages and buried them beneath unfathomable meters of telluric vomit.Natures fierceness coupled withhumans foolishness and callousness. The narrator tells us how the geologists actually predicted the calamity but their warnings wentunheededas the people dismissed them because they sounded like the tales of frightened old women. The scale of destruction caused is immense, and after the calamity, human beings, even with their best efforts, are unable to adequately tackle the situation.Memories of the past, its repression, and its eventual awakeningare themes that are effectively explored in this short story, sometimes literally and sometimes symbolically. At the end of the story, the reader understands that Rolf plunges into the mud pit in order to save Azucena is also asymbolic plungeinto his own memories of his traumatic past. The narrator, for instance, says:That night, imperceptibly, the unyielding floodgates that had contained Rolf Carl's past for so many years began to open, and the torrent of all that had lain hidden in the deepest and most secret layers of memory poured out, leveling before it the obstacles that had blocked his consciousness for so long.The mudentrapsits victims in a net of memories, as it were. This symbolic function of the mudcan be deduced from Azucena's point of view as well: she is unable to hold the rope that is tied around her because she is held by the bodies of her brothers and sisters clinging to her legs. This clinging works on bothliteral and symbolic levels, for both Azucena and Rolf.Indeed, the memories of the mud are as unfathomable meters of telluric vomit. Also, the President is described as waving to Azucena with a limp statesmans hand. The imagery, hence, create not only vivid pictures in the minds of the readers but also contribute to the story thematically. Foreshadowingis another device used in the story. In the opening passage of the story, the character-ar of Rolfis indicated when the reader is told how Rolf went to work on that particular event never suspecting that he would find a fragment of his past, lost thirty years before. Similarly, Azucenas tragic fate is hinted at early on in the story thus: The mud was like quicksand around her, and anyone attempting to reach her was in danger of sinking. The use ofsymbolismin the story has already been noted.NARRATIVE STYLE AND TECHNIQUEThe story is narratedin the first person by Rolf's wife who is unnamedin this particular story. The story is narrated as recollection, and it itself often takes the form of journalism. However, though the narration might resemble journalism in parts due to its reporting of a highly emotionally charged event, its tone is rarely bald and objective. Rather, various emotions pertaining to the characters are beautifully brought out through asimple yet sympathetic narration.The closing passage of the story marks ashift in the narratonas the narrator now addresses Rolf, her husband, directly. This shift lends an air of authenticity to the narrators sentiments and also shows the psychological struggles of Rolf and the narrators intense wishes for his betterment from a verypersonal viewpoint.TITLE OF THE STORYClay in the story standsfor predicament, burden, and most importantly, entanglement. Taken as a whole, clayssymbolizes the past and its various unpleasant memoriesthat suck people downward. The title of the story seems to suggest that all human beings have some miserable past memories or other buried inside them. It is perhaps a universal human condition. However, the last lines of the story are fused withoptimism, a tool that can act as a counter-forceto the suction of the mud and clay.ABOUT THE AUTHORIsabel Allende was born on August 2 1942. She lived in several countries as a child before leaving Chile soon after the assassination of her uncle Salvador Allende, the then President. She worked as a journalist. Allende mainly wrote novels and is most famous as the creator of the character Eva Luna who, incidentally, is the narrator of this short story. Isabel Allendes And of Clay Are We Created is the final piece in her short story collection The Stories of Eva Luna. The collection, originally published in 1989 and printed in English in 1991, chronicles the tales that the writer Eva Luna tells her lover Rolf Carl as they rest in bed. Allende fashions Eva Luna after Scheherazade, a key character in the framing narrative for the multi-tale Middle Eastern epic One Thousand and One Nights. The Stories of Eva Luna received widespread critical and commercial acclaim, further establishing the best-selling author as a contemporary literary giant. Though the stories in the collection traverse the spheres of magical realism, fantasy, and realism, And of Clay Are We Created belongs to the latter genre. The pieces opening, with one of its primary characters suspended in mud while much of the world mills uselessly about her, seems to invite ones suspension of disbelief. Yet Allende largely bases this story on the true predicament of 13-year-old Omayra Sanchez Garzn, a Colombian girl who became trapped up to her waist in a 1985 mudslide and died days later, the systems around her unable to rescue her in time.This guide refers to the paperback edition produced by Atria, an imprint of Simon & Schuster.The first sentences of And of Clay Are We Created hook its audience with a central, clearly delineated conflict: [T]hey discovered the girls head protruding from the mud pit, eyes wide open, calling soundlessly (Paragraph 1). A recent mudslide along a local mountain has buried the small villages that cling to the mountainside, killing most inhabitants and interring some survivors in meters of wet earth. The young girl whose head juts from the mud pit, 13-year-old Azucena, is alive at this point of the story's startling circumstance to those who witness it. The pieces unnamed narrator tells us that her lover, the reporter Rolf Carl, is one of the journalists who has been called to provide coverage of the mudslide. Rolf quickly befriends the girl. Rolf requests a pump to remove some of the muds water, hoping that this will counteract the suction and allow him to free Azucena. However, there is no available transport for the pump, and it cannot be sent until the following morning. Rolf remains with Azucena overnight and consoles her. He imagines a future for her, where [S]he would recover rapidly and [...] he could visit her and bring her gifts (Paragraph 15). On the second day, the narrator goes to the National Television broadcasting headquarters to watch coverage of Azucenas mud pit because she cannot bear to do so at home. She begins to feel Rof's same dedication to and compassion for the girl, calling on the citys influential figures to expedite the delivery of a pump. Though reporters, television crews, and movie teams come to the site and broadcast Azucenas face to millions, Rolf and the narrators requests for a pump go ignored. As Rolf keeps the girl company, her situation reminds him of his tragic childhood during World War II, when Russian forces deployed him to a concentration camp to bury captives who had starved to death. The narrator finally contacts a general who says he will send a pump the next morning on a military cargo plane, but it is too late: Azucena has forfeited her will to live. Rolf hugs her as they say their final goodbyes, and Azucena sinks into the mud. The experience forever changes Rolf, and he becomes pensive. Nevertheless, the narrator is confident that Rolf will eventually recover from this deeply traumatic ordeal. And of Clay We Are Created is a poignant short story written by the renowned Chilean author, Isabel Allende (born 1942), and it appears in her 1989 collection, The Stories of Eva Luna. The narrative revolves around a catastrophic mountain avalanche that claims thousands of lives in its wake. Amidst the devastation, the story follows the endeavors of a newscaster who becomes determined to rescue a young girl, only thirteen years old, trapped in the suffocating embrace of mud. Plot Summary: And of Clay We Are Created, Isabel AllendeThe story begins with a volcanic eruption, followed by a destructive mountain avalanche that wreaks havoc on a village, leaving countless individuals buried beneath layers of mud. One of the victims, Azucena, finds herself clinging desperately to life in a mudpit, drawing the attention of television news reporters. The narrator, who is the partner of a newscaster named Rolf Carl, witnesses her loved one's assignment to report on the devastating avalanche. As Carl delivers the live news from the scene, he is typically known for his emotional detachment. However, upon seeing Azucena trapped in the quagmire, he feels an innate urge to help her. Together with others, they attempt to pull her out of the mud using ropes and a life buoy, only to discover that her lower body is ensnared by the corpses of her own brothers and sisters, still clinging to her legs. Despite their efforts, Azucena remains trapped. The arrival of a water-draining pump is delayed until the following day, leaving Carl to spend the night by Azucena's side, fulfilling her request for companionship. Throughout the night, they converse, and Carl learns about her life - a thirteen-year-old girl who has never ventured beyond her village. Despite the dire circumstances, Carl remains optimistic, entertaining her with stories, trying to keep her spirits up. Struggles and GriefThe narrator, who has often accompanied Carl to the TV studios, watches him closely as he converses with the trapped girl throughout the night. By morning, they are both visibly exhausted from the lack of sleep. As Carl's weariness sets in, memories of his own traumatic past resurface. He reflects on his childhood in a concentration camp during the Second World War, marked by the cruelty of his father and the struggles of his mentally challenged sister, Katharina. Carl realizes that his career as a reporter has been, unconsciously, an attempt to repress these painful memories. As time goes on, Carl's emotional barriers start to crumble, and he relates deeply to Azucena's predicament. He sees a reflection of himself in her both trapped and burdened by fear. The arrival of the President to the scene adds to the intensity of emotions. Watching the televised encounter, the narrator notices a significant change in Carl, who surrenders to grief. Tragic EndAzucena confides in Carl, sharing her yearning for love from a boy, and in response, Carl expresses profound affection for her, praying for her suffering to end swiftly. Although the pump is finally on its way to rescue her, it arrives too late. Tragically, Azucena passes away, her eyes locked with Carl's until her last breath. The story concludes with the narrator directly addressing Carl, revealing that he frequently revisits the footage of Azucena, searching for any missed opportunity to save her. However, amidst this search for redemption, he is also, in some way, seeking to understand himself better through this poignant experience of loss and connection. Conclusion'And of Clay We Are Created' is a profoundly moving narrative that delves into themes of death, human bonds, grief, and self-reflection. Through the emotional journey of Rolf Carl and the tragic fate of Azucena, Isabel Allende brings to light the complexities of human compassion and the profound impact of shared experiences in the face of tragedy. Critical Analysis: And of Clay We Are Created, Isabel AllendeContext and Collection Conclusion'And of Clay We Are Created' serves as the concluding story in the collection The Stories of Eva Luna, which draws inspiration from the Arabian Nights anthology. In this collection, Eva Luna plays the role of Scheherazade, the storytelling figure, and the final story closes the book on a somber note following the tragic death of Azucena in the mudslide, and the profound changes it brings to Rolf Carl. Human Connection Amid TragedyDespite its melancholic tone, the story also highlights a positive aspect - the genuine and profound human connection formed between Azucena and Rolf Carl. This unexpected bond evolves between a teenage girl and an adult male newscaster, who initially only sought to report on her plight. The tragedy prompts Carl to break free from his emotional detachment and wholeheartedly try to help her. Azucena's impact on Carl goes beyond her physical rescue attempts. She enables him to confront his suppressed emotions and memories, leading to a significant transformation in his outlook on life. Through their connection, he finds the capacity to grieve not only for Azucena but also for the painful past he had long buried, making it a profoundly personal and universal experience. An Epiphany and SymbolismCarl's emotional response to Azucena's situation can be seen as an epiphany - a moment of profound realization often found in modern short stories. Allende portrays this change sincerely and deeply, convincing readers of its authenticity. Despite observing this change from the outside, the narrator, Eva, Rolf's wife, shares the shift in him through the television screen, emphasizing the significance of the television media in the story. Allende uses symbolism associated with television and news cameras to depict how modern society helplessly witnesses tragedy unfold, separated by screens, unable to intervene directly. The story also points to bureaucratic barriers hindering timely aid, which parallels the swamp of corruption and oppression that engulfs not only the country but humanity as a whole. The 'Flower in the Mud'Azucena's name, which means 'lily', is significant in symbolizing her beauty, fragility, and delicacy. She becomes the 'flower in the mud,' reflecting her vulnerability amidst the overwhelming forces of the mudslide and the corruption plaguing society. The title, 'And of Clay We Are Created,' reminds readers of the human origins from the earth itself, highlighting the question of how to rise above the hardships and challenges of life. Conclusion'And of Clay We Are Created' offers a powerful and thought-provoking conclusion to The Stories of Eva Luna. Through the tragic circumstances of Azucena's death and the transformative experience of Rolf Carl, Isabel Allende explores themes of human connection, grief, and the struggle to rise above adversity. The story leaves readers contemplating the resilience of the human spirit in the face of overwhelming challenges and the potential for empathy and solidarity even in the darkest times.

### What is the theme of and of clay are we created. And of clay we are created summary sparknotes.

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