

'Out, Out—'

by *Robert Frost*

The buzz saw snarled and rattled in the yard
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.
And from there those that lifted eyes could count
Five mountain ranges one behind the other
Under the sunset far into Vermont.
And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled,
As it ran light, or had to bear a load.
And nothing happened: day was all but done.
Call it a day, I wish they might have said
To please the boy by giving him the half hour
That a boy counts so much when saved from work.
His sister stood beside them in her apron
To tell them 'Supper.' At the word, the saw,
As if to prove saws knew what supper meant,
Leaped out at the boy's hand, or seemed to leap—
He must have given the hand. However it was,
Neither refused the meeting. But the hand!
The boy's first outcry was a rueful laugh,
As he swung toward them holding up the hand
Half in appeal, but half as if to keep
The life from spilling. Then the boy saw all —
Since he was old enough to know, big boy
Doing a man's work, though a child at heart —
He saw all spoiled. 'Don't let him cut my hand off —
The doctor, when he comes. Don't let him, sister!'
So. But the hand was gone already.
The doctor put him in the dark of ether.
He lay and puffed his lips out with his breath.
And then—the watcher at his pulse took fright.
No one believed. They listened at his heart.
Little—less—nothing!—and that ended it.
No more to build on there. And they, since they
Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

Out, Out—'



Five mountain ranges one behind the other
Under the sunset far into Vermont.

And the saw
snarled and rattled,
snarled and rattled,
As it ran light, or had to bear a load.



Call it a day, I wish they might have said
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They listened at his heart.
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DECONSTRUCTION

The photos in this essay were chosen with the plot of the poem in mind. The first image captures the setting – the mountain ranges at sunset, followed by the antagonist – the saw and the protagonist - the boy. The doctor who is unsuccessful at saving the life of the boy is pictured, as is the child's final resting place. The largest photo is of that of the saw – it is the most important "character" in the plot, setting up the conflict. The doctor's photo is the smallest, as he failed in his attempt to save the child, rendering him almost insignificant.

The text choices were made with the photos in mind, and each advances the "plot" of the photo essay. "Five mountain ranges one behind the other / Under the sunset far into Vermont" gives the reader the setting of the essay – time is the end of the day, at sunset, and place is the state of Vermont. "And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled, / As it ran light, or had to bear a load." is an example of personification, making the saw into a creature capable of taking life. Notice that it is the only piece of text in bold, suggesting the importance of the saw to the story in the essay. It is, after all, the antagonist. If not for its actions, there would have been no conflict. "Call it a day, I wish they might have said / To please the boy by giving him the half hour" gives the reader knowledge of the protagonist, and how a few minutes meant the difference between life and death for the boy. "So. But the hand was gone already. / The doctor put him in the dark of ether." further advances the plot of the photo essay. The boy has lost his hand, and is about to lose his life. "They listened at his heart. / Little—less—nothing!—and that ended it." provides an end to the story – the boy is dead.

The font colours change with each picture. The orange reflects the sunset, while the bold, dark red is suggestive of the blood spilled by the saw. The green symbolizes the young life of the boy, while the grey reflects his fading life. The final font colour is black, representing mourning. The font of the first three texts sets is 12-point, while the last two are 11-point, suggestive of the boy's life draining out of him and then stopping completely. The layout of the essay moves the viewer's eye smoothly from one photo/text set to the next. If turned on its side, the layout would resemble the ragged edge of the buzz saw, the ragged edge which took life from the boy. And, around all three pages, runs a thick black line, suggestive of mourning the life of someone so young.