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The selection from Edward P. Jones' novel *The Known World* depicts the character of Moses as a pensive, hardworking man who lives in harmony with nature. From the beginning of the passage, it is clear that Moses leads a life full of arduous physical labor, but is not one to complain. Though it is revealed that the master has just died and Moses has ~~already~~ already worked in the fields for 15 hours, he still remains outdoors to admire the sunset and tend to the mule. Moses' detailed description of the sunset illustrates his appreciation for the natural world and its beauty. This affinity is further demonstrated when Moses begins to eat the dirt from the field. Though this action seems at first strange, Moses justifies his behavior by explaining, "he ate [the dirt] not only to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the field, but because the eating of it tied him to the only thing in his small world that meant almost as much as his own life" (28-31). The act of eating dirt is clearly not a social norm, even for those in Moses' community, therefore it is clear that Moses' connection to nature is ~~unusually~~ exceptionally deep and sentimental. ~~war~~

Later on in the passage, Moses demonstrates once again his unique relationship with the natural world. The night has fallen, but instead of joining his family in his cabin, Moses chooses to walk through the cornfields alone. By prioritizing his love of nature over spending time with his



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Family, Moses demonstrates the great importance he places on nature. After walking through the cornfields, Moses "undressed down to his nakedness and lay down" (81-27), and drinks the rainwater out of his hands. At this point, Moses has eaten, drank, and physically joined with nature. His actions can be attributed to the belief he stated earlier in the passage, when he revealed that he places as much value on the natural world around him as he does his own life. His actions initially seem out of the ordinary and questionable, but after closer examination, they in fact make sense. From what is revealed in the passage, it seems that Moses has worked on the fields for a long time, and values nothing more in a man than he does hard work. When describing the Irish man who gave the master the unproductive plot of land, Moses speaks of him in a scornful tone. It is clear that Moses values honesty and hard work, therefore he is displeased with the lying, unhelpful Irish man. Moses seems to have learned that one facet of his life that is constantly reliable is nature. Though factors of nature do change all the time, such as weather and sunsets, Moses knows that nature itself will always be there to comfort, aid, and dazzle him. The people and events in his life may sometimes be fickle, which is why he has learned that the one thing he



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can fully trust and love is nature. In the passage, the most extensive ~~at~~ and descriptive selections are when Moses describes aspects of nature such as the "five-inch-long memory of red orange" ⁽¹¹⁻²⁾ sunset, the instance when he eats dirt, and the ~~explanation~~ explanation of how he enjoys sleeping naked in the fields and waking up "covered with dew" (89-90). The lengthy descriptions of Moses' ~~relationship~~ spiritual, physical, and emotional connection with nature delineate the large importance Moses places on the natural world, and what he holds at highest value in his life.

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In his book *The Known World*, Jones describes a plantation and the slave-life on it. Specifically, he details and characterizes Moses, a slave with very different values and attitudes than those of any other slave. Rather than embracing family life, like the other slaves, Moses develops a nearly personal connection with nature as a way of coping with slavery and, perhaps only temporarily, feeling free.

The only way that Moses feels like he is out of his chains, both the literal and figurative, is by embracing nature, the only aspect in his life that is truly free. Moses eats dirt because "the eating of it tied him to the only thing in his small world that meant almost as much as his own life" (29-31). He values this seemingly grotesque ~~aspect~~ practice so much because, by being connected and ultimately being one with nature, he is able to take on some of nature's characteristics. Eating the dirt shows Moses the constantly changing and fleeing aspect of

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nature as he can taste drastic differences in the dirt from season to season. He tastes the "sweetened metal" (33) of July and the "sour moldiness" (37) of fall and winter. Similarly, he can smell "the coming of rain" (47-48) and hear "more clearly the last bird of the day" (63) than children playing. Jones specifically uses this imagery of ~~the~~ many of Moses' senses further illustrate his intense relationship with nature. Nature takes him away from slavery and puts him in an entirely natural world where all that matters is dirt and rain, whose natural life supercedes imprisonment and allows him to forget his struggles.

The scene with Moses laying in the rain is contrasted with his old-age rheumatism to further explain how nature gave him temporary freedom. Moses undresses "down to his nakedness" (81-82) to feel entirely freed of any constraints, such as clothes, to better feel nature and its ability change and do whatever it wishes with no one commanding it. However, his "rheumatism chained up his body" (86) once again. This chain

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is worse than the literal kind for Moses because now he can no longer experience nature and has no way of feeling free. He "blame[s] the chains on evenings such as these" (87) because the chains were his reasons for seeking freedom ~~and~~ and lusting after nature.

Jones reveals Moses as one of the few slaves who was able to find some temporary form of freedom even during slavery. The point of view is directly from Moses, even though it's written in 3rd person. Jones describes details of Moses' senses and actions to hint at Moses' use of such rituals. Even though Moses was chained during slavery, the chains of rheumatism are much more detrimental because they lock him away from the one aspect that gives him solace - nature.

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The passage from the The Known World by Edward P. Jones, characterizes Moses as one who understands and the importance of the land. The passage begins with the Moses describing how after working fifteen hours, unlike the sea rest who go to seek rest, he stays in the fields. It becomes prevalent that Moses has an attachment to this field and the land. "He was the only man in the realm, slave or free, who ate dirt... eating of it tied him to the only thing in his small world that meant almost as much as his own life." This very clearly shows the importance of the Earth and the this field is to Moses. He has a strong connection to the Earth, nearly putting it as important as himself. But he is the only one who has such desires which shows he is unique and a bit of an outcast, it is likely others do not understand him.

In the third paragraph "Moses smelled the coming of rain" and indeed it does rain, however when "he thought was the sound of playing children" there was none. This shows he spends more time with nature and in this field than he does with people. He chooses to be a part of the Earth than with humanity to the point when he no longer recognizes the sound of

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humans. "He could ^{hear} far more clearly the last bird of the day. This shows that ~~he~~ he is much ~~in tune~~ in tune for nature, ~~and has chosen to~~ showing which he prefers.

Finally the passage ends with Moses, stripping - becoming one with nature as it may be - and lays in the ~~field~~ ^{forest} as it rains. This scene truly ~~en~~ encompasses the aspects of nature with the ~~earth~~ ^{Earth}, the weather, and the ~~forest~~ trees. Even in the worse conditions, he is able to be at ease with this nature and fall asleep. Most would be unable to sleep if they were inside and protected, let alone when they are in the middle. Moses has the choice to go home to his family, but rather chooses to be with his field. Moses describes this ~~field~~ field as his "small world" indicating that he doesn't know much else beyond his world. It is because this world is known to him that he sticks himself inside it. It is predictable and a comfort. This portrays the idea that as humans, we do not like to leave our comfort zone, but rather, we further encompass it until we too are so lost in it, ~~it becomes hard to see we~~ too become nothing more than the landscape.

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Edward P. Jones reveals his character Moser through strong visual imagery and his use of third person limited point of view. Using these devices, Jones is able to convey how Moser is one with nature and his work, as well as his separation from the rest of his people, the ^{feeling of} freedom in ~~of~~ a slave.

The narration starts out describing the work that Moser did under his master. It evokes a gloomy and hopeless feeling, showing how his family worked themselves to exhaustion each day. But a shift occurs early on, focusing on Moser and his actions. Strong visual imagery of the sunset gives the reader the idea that Moser feels as if he is one with nature. The fact that he works under a master does not occur as he tatters the dirt and it gives him a sensation ~~of freedom~~ that his own people did not.

~~The focus on organic images, such as the sun with the sun gone and the moon~~

The emphasis on how often Moser feels these emotions and repeats his actions solidifies the sense of freedom and timelessness that comes with his work with the earth. He forgets his troubles and shrugs off the



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never-ending work to appreciate the beauty that he encounters each day. He strips down naked, showing his need to be in a more primal, more natural state when experiencing this euphoria.

"When he was an old man... he would look back and blame the chains on evenings such as these, and on nights when he lost himself completely..." exemplifies this attitude.

The use of third person limited lets the reader experience all the emotions that are felt by Moses while giving details that explain his situation.

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