

Student Sample

Write the *opening* of a story entitled “Broken, and create a sense of mood and place.

The sun rose above the horizon, and the blinding light from each ray shone through the cracks and crevices of the disheveled kitchen window. The usual smell of dew on the green, morning grass was overpowered by fermented alcohol and putrid vomit. James and Mildred lay fast asleep on the cold, hard ground of the bathroom seeing as how both were too drunk and far too tired from the events of the previous night to reach their bed.

There was no longer any trace of Nelson and Fran ever being in the house; they had picked up all their belongings and stumbled out long before morning came. All that could be seen were empty glasses and half-drunk bottles of liquor. Compared to the hectic night before, the house was soundless. The slightest noise could echo throughout the room. This silence, however, was abruptly interrupted by groans coming from a room upstairs followed by a piercing scream.

“James! James! Wake up! Our son, he's going to be here soon for his birthday!” Mildred yelled, a clear feeling of discomfort could be heard in her shaky voice.

She continued her whining, which was stirring everything up around her. That was, until James could no longer support her irritating voice, and interrupted her. “Shut up Mildred. You’re waking all the neighbors. I’m trying to sleep.” James sighed, and in that sigh all the guilt he had so carefully hidden away became tangible.

“James, what’s wrong? What’s on your mind? Maybe you should help me find something for our boy’s birthday gift.” Like always, Mildred spoke rushed, not really caring for a reply.

It was as clear as day that Mildred did not remember anything that had happened just a few hours ago during the party. If it were up to her, there never was a party. Nelson and Fran never stepped foot in her house. And her son... well, he never died.

“Mildred, you dog, what are you talking about—” Before he could finish his sentence, she had already lost interest in the conversation.

Couch cushions were being lifted and underneath stuffed with garbage and dirty clothes that had been laying around the living room. Every time she passed by a table she looked for something for her son’s birthday gift. James, who had not been drinking as much as Mildred had during the party, started realizing that his wife did not remember a single thing.

(405 words)