Swains Vision Essay, Research Paper

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There comes a time in every young mans life when he realizes the difference between the superficial problems of childhood and the real world of adulthood. Some boys learn the nuances of being a man at an early age, while others don t quite understand the truth of maturity until after they ve lived on their own for a while. Loudin Swain was a young man who didn t experience much along the lines of adulthood until he was nearly out of high school. Through the decisions he made in his quests to drop two weight classes and wrestle the state champ and also win the love of an older woman, Loudin learns that some things in life aren t given to you and that nothing lasts forever.

Vision Quest opens with Loudin Swain training for wrestling. He talks of how he wants to make his mark in the world this year, but doesn t realize that just the opposite will happen, the world will make it s mark on him. Loudin is very into his wrestling and is the number one wrestler in his weight class. Although this is something to be proud of, he is not content. Loudin wishes to drop two weight classes and wrestle Shoot, the state champion who is the guy to beat. This is Loudin s goal for the year and this is how he plans to make his mark. He trains long hours and constantly works out in his attempt to reach this goal. Loudin is the type of person who focuses so intensely on what he wishes to achieve that he doesn t see all of the other aspects of life around him. This is a sign of immaturity and Loudin will overcome this problem within the course of the movie.

Loudin works at a local hotel where he delivers room service. One night he is confronted with a rather uncomfortable experience. Loudin delivers dinner to a room where a man is practicing Tai Chi. Loudin and this man strike up conversation about the benefits of this type of exercise and Loudin begins to attempt performing Tai Chi under the gentleman s watchful eye. The man then touches Loudin in his crotch in an attempt to seduce him. Although Loudin isn t homosexual, he is excited by the idea that he is viewed as an attractive person. Loudin is still a virgin, and most likely isn t used to having people sexually attracted to him. This is a big step for Loudin and his self-realization; he later mentions that he misses the man who had made a pass at him. No one had ever made a pass at him like that before.

On his way home after work Loudin meets Carla, an older woman who is stranded in town due to a broken automobile. Loudin is attracted to her and convinces his father to let her stay with them until her car is repaired. Over time Loudin begins to fall in love with Carla and gets his heart broken by her several times (Carla isn t as quick to fall in love with him.) Throughout the course of the movie their friendship grows stronger, as do Loudin s feelings for Carla. She teaches Loudin the proper behavior and manners necessary to gain the respect of women. They eventually become so close in their relationship that Carla decides to engage in intercourse with Loudin. This is Loudin s first experience and also the most obvious step in coming of age, or becoming a man.

Now that Loudin has won Carla s love he begins to slack off on his exercise routine and has second thoughts about wrestling Shoot. The day of the wrestling match Loudin returns home from school to find that Carla has already left, without saying goodbye. Loudin is emotionally destroyed by having lost his first love and goes to speak to Elmo, the hotel cook in whom Loudin always confided. Elmo isn t at work however; he had taken the night off to see Loudin wrestle. Elmo gives a very moving speech about the power of one mans impact on the lives of others and therefore convinces Loudin to wrestle that evening. Loudin now realizes the support that all of his family and friends have shown in his quest to wrestle Shoot. He hadn t thought that the match was that important to anyone but himself, but can now see that there are several people who care about him deeply enough to take the time to go support him in his attempt at achieving his goal. Loudin goes to wrestle Shoot.

After barely making weigh in, both by time and weight, Loudin sits alone in the locker room sulking in his own depression, having lost his first love. Just then Carla enters the room to say goodbye to Loudin. She explains that her plan all along was to leave as soon as her car was repaired, but that she enjoyed her time with him. As she leaves the room Loudin calls her back; I d do it again. Me too she replies. Loudin now realizes the heartbreak involved in growing up and that relationships come and go. He knows now that it is important to cherish every day in life as if it were his last, and to live life to it s fullest.