

# How to Talk to a Hunter by Pam Houston Essay

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In "How to Talk to a Hunter," the narrator struggles with separating practical intelligence from emotional intelligence.

The narrator knows that her "relationship" with this man, the hunter, will emotionally devastate her in the end, but she does

not care. She willingly goes forth with the relationship, even if he is just using her for sex. In Pam Houston's short story,

"How to Talk to a Hunter," Houston uses tone along with mood, ambiguity, and archetype in order to convey the theme of a

complicated relationship in that people often carry the baggage of past relationships into the next.

The first way Houston conveys the theme of a complicated relationship is through the use of tone, which in effect creates

the mood of the story. Tone is the implied attitude of a writer toward the subject and characters of a work. Mood, on the

other hand, is a feeling, emotional state, or disposition of mind. A good example of both literary devices can be found in the

line, "But the hunter's house is so much warmer than yours, and he'll give you a key, and just like a [woman](#), you'll think that

means something" (Houston, 14). The demeaning tone of this statement implies that women look too much into one little

gesture, such as being given a key to a man's house. The woman wants to believe that the key was given as a symbol of

love, respect, and commitment, when, in fact, it was given as a means for her to easily come and go for sex, which is all the

hunter wants. Mood is also strongly felt in this line because she is initially happy and thinks this gesture means something

more since this act usually symbolizes the "next big step" in a real relationship. However, when she begins to th...

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...imately stem from the lack of

communication between men and women. There was no real communication between the two main characters which

ultimately lead to a lack of trust on the main female character's part. Without trust, the demise of a relationship is inevitable.

The way Houston wrote this story conveyed the theme of a complicated relationship perfectly. Just by reading this story,

people could gain great insight into what a healthy relationship should be like, which was not at all what the relationship

depicted in this story was. Emotional [intelligence](#) ultimately triumphed over practical intelligence, and the "relationship"

between the hunter and the woman was a disaster from the start.

Works Cited

Houston, Pam. "How to Talk to a Hunter." Cowboys Are My Weakness. Boston: W.W. Norton &, Incorporated, 2005. 14-17. Print.

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