

"stupid counterfeit boys own code of 'fair play' in here. You don't know you're living sweetheart!"

Alan: "could have been a discrepancy..."
Spanky: "Eh?"

"I'm at the University"

"I've got those mags you wanted to see"

"you didn't get in"

"what is he...a brain surgeon? Three quid!"
The shock of earning that much shows how far apart Alan is in life not just concerning wages, easy for middle class to succeed. Society in their favour.

Social Class

"there is a real world out there. Some of us have to live in it!" Jack is made fun of for trying to get on with his life and get a stable job. It is tough with reality, unlike the slab boys.

"I'm at the university"
Alan is on his way to success. He has a completely different ambitions from the Slab and university is not even in the same wave length as them.

Dreams and Ambitions (escape)

"I'm a designer now...god I don't feel too well" Hector is in disbelief that he has finally achieved his dream. His hard work has been recognised and he stood out from Phil and Spanky.

"Giotto was a slab boy!" Phil is still hopeful and determined to achieve his dreams of becoming an artist, even though most of the people around him don't believe in his artwork.

"I'm biding my time sweetheart... I'm showing that swine the door." Sadie is desperate to leave her abusive husband. Leaving him is only thing that is keeping her going, she wants free from his burden

Themes of Slab Boys By John Byrne

bullying

"bile green...acne yellow..." mock those above them and cannot take their work seriously. They constantly make childish remarks toward Jack throughout the play.

"Ach pish Jack! You're a bunch of no talent, no hoppers" Phil verbally attacks Jack and at the peak of the argument lets his jealousy and anger take over, putting down and degrading Jack for his success.

"Spanky?- its a knockout kid" Spanky lies to Hector allowing the humiliation to continue. he adds fuel to the fire, ignores what is right and wrong. He values Phil over Hector so lies to get their next laugh.

"thats cos you're a tube, Hector." (Spanky) Clearly no respect for Hector as this is said in the opening page of the play. Spanky sees Hector's vulnerability and takes advantage when what Hector needs support.

"Lucille would never consider going to the staffie with you, Hector... you're havoring." Very blunt and discounts Hector's feeling, crushing his dream when supposed to be his friends in the slab room.

mental health

"first week tied to a rubber mattress, next five wired to a generator"
Treatments for mental illness were brutal and barbaric. Often made illness worse, these people were hidden away.

"D'you think going off your head's catching?"
There was little knowledge of how mental illness worked. Phil feared that he would become like his mum, as a product of his environment, genetically(infectious)

"it wasn't an accident, she meant to do it"
People couldn't get their head round how mental health had affected Phil's Mum's actions. Mental Disorders were uncommon and not discussed in society.

"thats shocking" mental health wasn't recognised as a problem or accepted in society. Dark humour is used to help Phil cope with the situation but the subject is never taken seriously.

"to say five decades of the rosary over your maws open wrists"
Phil's mother is mentally unstable and there was little understanding of mental illness so a shortage of help making it hard for Phil.

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