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## The Hubris of Mankind in 'Convergence of the Twain'

Hardy's "The Convergence of the Twain" tells of the events that lead up to the sinking of the Titanic through its collision with an iceberg, while on a deeper meaning, highlighting the tragic consequences of the hubris of mankind. Through opposition and diction, the speaker criticizes the human race for succumbing to hubris and attempting to become greater than God.

The once-magnificent Titanic is left alone and isolated on the lonely seafloor in ruins with no human life to be found, suggesting that the vanity and hubris of mankind is the cause for the Titanic's tragic end. The Titanic's being disconnected from "human vanity" (2) and the "Pride of Life that planned her" (3) at the bottom of the ocean underlines that man's hubris has consequently led to the downfall of the Titanic. The imagery of the scene is a sharp contrast to the once lively and grand Titanic. The "cold currents" (6) that have replaced the "salamandrine fires" (3) in the ship are an example of sensory language that highlight the absence of life and the warmth that accompanies it through fireplaces and lights. A series of oppositions are also introduced, emphasizing the lifelessness of the shipwreck: mirrors meant "to glass the opulent" (8) and reflect human beauty are crawling with grotesque sea worms, and jewelry and treasures "lie lightless" (12) on the surface without their former shine. The fishes' question "'What does this vaingloriousness down here?'" (15) implies that the riches of the Titanic seem out-of-place on the gloomy seabed, hinting that the tragedy of the Titanic could have been avoided if man hadn't been overcome by hubris and ambition to create something as impressive as the Titanic. Through opposition and imagery, the speaker highlights how mankind's ambitions can be reduced to nothing if overcome by hubris.

An iceberg is created by a divine being to parallel the building of the Titanic, reflecting that the ambitions and creations of man can never surpass the power of nature or God. The decision of the "Immanent Will" (18), which may represent God or the forces of nature, to create a "sinister mate" (19) for the Titanic foreshadows the collision of the ship and the "Shape of Ice" (21), as the diction in the words "sinister mate" imply that the iceberg is meant to be joined in partnership with the Titanic. This idea of the Titanic and the iceberg being destined to collide with each other is further developed as the speaker mentions that the iceberg grew as the "ship grew / in stature, grace and hue" (22-23), showing the two objects as equals. The iceberg's creation in "shadowy silent distance" (24), however, opposes the creation of the Titanic, which was widely popularized by man around the world; nature's rather secretive and low-key building of the iceberg demonstrates the power of nature, as wealth and popularity is not needed for nature or God to create the giant iceberg. By describing the secretive creation of the iceberg through a flashback, the speaker shows readers the events that led to the sinking of the Titanic while showcasing the superior power of God over the hubristic mankind.

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The iceberg and the Titanic are forced to collide with one another, implying that they were fated to crash together and prove the superiority of God and nature. With "no mortal eye" (26) being able to recognize the fated collision of the Titanic and the iceberg, the idea of divine intervention is suggested, as humans only thought that the iceberg and the Titanic only "seemed to be" (25) alien and unrelated. The description of the collision as an "intimate welding" (27) is a pun; while the ship and the iceberg are forced to be welded together in the crash, they are also wedded like a husband and wife through marriage, showing that they were meant to be together. The iceberg and the Titanic being two "anon twin halves" (30) also demonstrates the inevitability of the catastrophe, as they complete each other like "two hemispheres" (33) of the earth. The command of the "Spinner of the Years" (31), another name for the "Immanent Will" (18), that finally joins the Titanic and the iceberg in their "marriage" highlights the power of the divine, as the being is able to control the fate of the Titanic and the iceberg, unlike the condescended man. The personification of the Titanic and the iceberg and their intimate "wedding" reflect the "convergence" in the title of the poem, as they join together as one through their destined collision.

"The Convergence of the Twain" tells of the catastrophic downfall of the Titanic and how the events that led up to the tragedy were influenced by divine intervention. Through the poem, the author provokes readers to avoid falling to hubris and suffering the same fate as the Titanic..

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