Gabriel Character Analysis

To Nora Barnacle; September 26, 1904; 7 S. Peter’s Terrace, Cabra, Dublin.

My dearest Nora  I must tell you how desolate I have felt since our last night. I was thinking, with my usual way of regarding things, that I had a cold but I am sure it is more than a physical ailment. How little words are necessary between us! We seem to know each other though we say nothing almost for hours. I often wonder do you realise it. The mere recollection of you overpowers me with some kind of dull slumber. The energy which is required for carrying on conversations seems to have left me lately and I find myself constantly slipping into silence. In a way it seems to me a pity that we do not say more to each other and yet I know how futile it is for me to remonstrate either with you or with myself for I know that when I meet you next our lips will become mute. You see how I begin to babble in these letters. And yet why should I be ashamed of words? Why should I not call you what in my heart I continually call you? What is it that prevents me unless it be that no word is tender enough to be your name?

Jim

Write if you find time.

ANALYSIS: Review page 27 of “The Dead”. Consider the connection between the last lines of Joyce’s above letter and Gabriel’s letter to Gretta. Analyze how Joyce’s letter can help the reader better comprehend what Gabriel’s emotions and motives in this particular scene.
To Nora Barnacle; August 22, 1909; 44 Fontenoy Street, Dublin.

Dear love How sick, sick, sick I am of Dublin! It is the city of failure, of rancor and of unhappiness. I long to be out of it.

I think always of you. When I go to bed at night it is a kind of torture for me. I will not write on this page what fills my mind, the very madness of desire. I see you in a hundred poses, grotesque, shameful, virginal, languorous. Give yourself to me, dearest, all, all when we met. All that is holy, hidden from others, you must give to me freely. I wish to be lord of your body and soul.

There is a letter which I dare not be the first to write and which yet I hope every day you may write to me. A letter for my eyes only. Perhaps you will write it to me and perhaps it will calm the anguish of my longing.

What can come between us now? We have suffered and been tried. Every veil of shame or diffidence seems to have fallen from us. Will we not see in each other’s eyes the hours and hours of happiness that are waiting for us?

Adorn your body for me, dearest. Be beautiful and happy and loving and provoking, full of memories, full of cravings, when we meet. Do you remember the three adjectives I have used in _The Dead_ in speaking of your body. They are these: ‘musical and strange and perfumed’.

My jealousy is still smouldering in my heart. Your love for me must be fierce and violent to make me forget utterly.

Do not let me ever lose the love I have for you now, Nora. If we could go on together through life in that way how happy we should be. Let me love you, Nora. Do not kill my love.

I am bringing you a little present. It is all my own idea and I have had great trouble in getting it done as I wished. But it will always remind you of this time.

Write to me, dearest, and think of me.

What is a week or ten days to all the time of joy before us!

Jim

**ANALYSIS:** Review pages 28 and 29 of “The Dead”. There are two comparisons that can be made between Joyce’s letter and Gabriel in the story. Analyze how Joyce’s letter can help the reader better comprehend what Gabriel’s emotions and motives in this particular scene.
To Nora Barnacle; December 24, 1909; 44 Fontenoy Street, Dublin.

...Darling, I am in a most dreadful state of excitement at present. All day I have been in the middle of the bustling Xmas crowd down at the cinematograph. There was a young constable there on special duty. When it was over I took him upstairs to give him a drink and found that he was from Galway and his sisters were at the Presentation Convent with you. He was amazed to hear where Nora Barnacle had ended. He said he remembered you in Galway, a handsome girl with curls and a proud walk. My God, Nora, how I suffered! Yet I could not stop talking to him. He seems a fine courteous-mannered young man. I wondered did my darling, my love, my dearest, my queen ever turn her young eyes towards him. I had to speak to him because he came from Galway but O how I suffered, darling. I am dreadfully excited. I don’t know what I am writing. Nora, I want to go back to you. Forget everybody but me, darling. I am sure there are finer fellows in Galway than your poor lover but O, darling, one day you will see that I will be something in my country. How excited and restless I feel! I enclose his sister’s names. I saw that he was astonished at how you had ended. But, O God, would I not give you all the Kingdoms of this world if I only could. O, darling, I am so jealous of the past and yet I bite my nails with excitement whenever I see anybody from the strange dying western city in which my love, my beautiful wild flower of the hedges, passed her young laughing girlish years...

Jim

ANALYSIS: The reader of the above letter can learn a lot about how Joyce feels about Nora from his use of language. Analyze how Joyce’s letter can help the reader better comprehend what Gabriel’s emotions and motives in the end of “The Dead” when Gabriel is hearing and then thinking about Gretta’s story.
DIRECTIONS:

Choose one of the above letters James Joyce (Jim) wrote to Nora and respond to the associated prompt with an analytical comparison chart and short response. See below for an example.

Analytical Comparison Chart: below, you would write in the left column personality traits and characteristics you notice about James Joyce from the language in his letter. Include any potential lines you see that parallel lines in “The Dead”. In the right column, write the personality traits and characteristics of Gabriel Conroy in the scene of “The Dead” that you are focusing on. Also, include the comparative lines in “The Dead” that parallel lines in Joyce’s letter.

Feel free to jot down any notes you like or literally draw connections between traits and details you see in the left and right columns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>James Joyce</th>
<th>Gabriel Conroy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Short Response: Below the chart, write a short response no more than half of a page with your analysis addressing the prompt you chose. Make sure to include cited evidence in your response.