

Task for *The Natural Way of Things*

Character retrieval chart

Character: Boncer

Element	Example	Possible effect
Naming:	Boncer	Sounds like 'bouncer', associated with physical violence.
Physical appearance:	Unattractive: 'pale and pock-marked'; 'greasy black hair'; 'old acne scars'.	A contrast with Teddy who is physically attractive but as mindlessly misogynistic as Boncer.
Background information (race, class, gender):	Resentful lower-class white man; a misogynist.	Carries the idea that the powerful use the anger and resentment of lower class men for their own purposes.
Actions:	Physically violent. 'Bustling and purposeful'.	Constructed as mindlessly active without any capacity for thought or reflection.
Verbs linked to character:	Action verbs: 'jerks her along', 'flings open', 'shoves', 'snatches up'.	Contribute to his construction as mindlessly active.
Speech: what is said: Tagging of speech:	Boncer's speech is tagged with verbs of command: 'orders', 'shouts', 'yells'.	Boncer sees himself as the commandant of this prison.
Reactions of other characters:	Most of the other characters fear him.	However, he is finally shown to be a coward.
Stereotyping:	Stereotyped as a vicious misogynist.	The reader has little sympathy for this character. He is a stock villain but a familiar one.
Interiority:	No interior life but he does display some ironic self-knowledge when he describes his online dating site profile.	There is pathos and irony when the dying Boncer calls out to his mother for comfort.
Growth/change:	No growth although he does briefly soften after his liaison with Hetty.	Boncer only has a sense of agency by exercising control over the powerless.
Oppositions:	Not really a binary opposite to the imprisoned girls. He is, in fact, as powerless as they are.	Ironically the real division is not between genders but between those with power and the rest of society.