

ENGLISH – AFTER DARKNESS

"It is better to be discreet and present a partial truth than risk conflict."

How does Ibaraki's view of discretion and truth change throughout After Darkness?

Sometimes, as time goes by, the need to keep secrets is less important; on the contrary, revealing them is necessary in order to change and grow. Indeed, Christine Piper's historical fiction, 'After Darkness', explores how the emotions that drive the need for secrecy can negatively affect the individual and their ability to maintain meaningful relationships with their loved ones. Through her male protagonist, Dr Ibaraki, Piper demonstrates how debilitating shame and guilt can be and how the individual must overcome their reluctance to reveal the truth in order to grow and change. Utilizing a non-linear structure reflecting the inner workings of the individual psyche, Piper showcases how Ibaraki transforms from being discreet at the start of the novel to his realization that sometimes the truth needs to be exposed to save oneself from misunderstanding. Ultimately, Piper suggests that it is best to reveal the truth rather than keep secrets, especially when the other's motivations result in hurting others. However, it can also be seen how in [an attempt to](#) avoid conflict, at times, can also create conflict.

Sometimes, the individual's loyalty to one's employers' results in conflict, when they are forced to shroud the truth. Piper's characterization of Ibaraki at the start of his career at the Epidemic Prevention Laboratory reveals to her readers a person committed to keeping his word. By presenting Ibaraki as a fresh graduate desperate to find a job in Tokyo, we understand his inclination towards keeping his 'discretion', as ordered by Kimura who offers him the research position. Additionally, Piper explains how in order to "practice like [his] father", Ibaraki is ready to sacrifice anything, including his ability to communicate honestly with his loved ones in order to keep the job. Furthermore, Ibaraki's "silence" with his workmates, Nomura and Ota, distances him from them. By juxtaposing Ibaraki's promise of 'discretion', with his wife, Kayako's plea that "husbands and wives should not keep secrets from each other,". [Complete this statement](#) The irony of his discretion due to his commitment at work, in attempt to avoid conflict with his employer, subsequently creates conflict in his marriage. His silence causes distance in his marriage with his wife, as he had to "keep secrets" from her due to his commitments. Piper reflects on the inner conflict which threatens to tear through the fabric of his marriage, as well as other close relationships, when Ibaraki chooses to commit to his work demands rather than his relationships. It's better to reveal the truth sometimes rather than keep it in secrecy as it could potentially cause harm and conflict with other individuals. Piper reveals that Ibaraki at times [has to](#) reveal the truth in order to protect others from getting hurt. At first Ibaraki thought that Yamada was "innocent" and he did not believe that Yamada hurt Stan. This is because of the "comfort" that Yamada gave to Ibaraki when he came to the internment camp, therefore the inclination that Ibaraki had to defend his friend. [What about it? Explain the effect of the inclination.](#) However, Piper later shows Ibaraki as a changed person as he learned from the "executive meeting" that Yamada was the person who has hurt Stan thus this led to Ibaraki being "wary of him". Piper depicts that individuals change as they learn to know the truth as Ibaraki confronts Yamada claiming that he "will tell the mayor" about Yamada's negative intentions towards Stan. Piper reflects on how Ibaraki grows as a person as he learns the real truth of others and how he will even stand up for others if the other person's intention is going to hurt others.