

# Comparing doll queen to metamorphosis

Literature



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The novellas 'The Doll Queen' by Carlos Fuentes and 'Metamorphosis' by Franz Kafka, both share themes exploring human behavior. They explore dark emotions and tragic stories. In 'The Doll Queen' a man goes back to find a childhood friend of his that he had forgotten and in 'Metamorphosis' a man wakes to find his body transformed into an insect. Although these stories are different, they share similar themes of alienation, imprisonment and personal identity. The theme of alienation is a common dream shared between 'The Doll Queen' and 'Metamorphosis'.

In 'The Doll Queen', Carlos initially embraces the emotional and intuitive nature of Amilamia, joining her in play. He eventually rejects her for his books, symbolizing a more rational way of life. When he visits the house, he pretends to be other people in order to hide his real emotional intentions. Even the mother's rosary beads and 'doll queen' shrine, representing religion, disgust him. Whereas the theme in 'The Doll Queen' is alienation from the emotional, the theme in 'Metamorphosis' is alienation from the physical.

Once Gregor's body has been transformed into an insect, his entire family rejects him. His father locks Gregor in his room after seeing his transformation and throws apples at him, wounding him. His transformation has left him unable to communicate with his family and he can only stand by in silence. Even Gregor's body, once it had transformed, shows alienation between Gregor and his body due to his lack of concern for the transformation. The extent of his isolation is symbolized by a magazine image of a girl he framed to keep him company.

Another common dream shared between the two stories is the theme of imprisonment. Amilamia, in 'The Doll Queen', is imprisoned by her parents as a way for them to celebrate and remember her past rather than the present. When Carlos begins to share stories of their daughter, the parents show genuine sadness showing that they miss the young, happy child they once knew. Amilamia, now imprisoned by her parents and physically trapped in a wheelchair, stands in contrast to the child-sized doll that her parents created in the hopes of preserving their daughter's youth and innocence.

In 'Metamorphosis', Gregor is imprisoned by his responsibilities. He is imprisoned at his job in order to provide money for his family, but dreams of the day when he no longer needs to work. His metamorphosis is a representation of his need to escape from these demands but it fails to bring him freedom. Gregor, now imprisoned in his room and by his family, finds that the only escape for him is death. The last common dream shared between 'The Doll Queen' and 'Metamorphosis' is the idea of personal Identity.

The two main characters in 'The Doll Queen', Carlos and Amilamia, can be seen as two sides of one person. Carlos is rational and orderly while Amilamia is emotional and intuitive. When Carlos rejects her, he is actually rejecting a part of himself. Amilamia is deformed, symbolic of the destruction caused when one tried to hold back a part of themselves or their past. In 'Metamorphosis', however, Gregor experiences a journey into finding out who he is. As an insect, Gregor realizes that he spent his life living entirely for other people and ignoring his own needs.

Yet he still continues to act only for his family by doing his best not to trouble them, even going so far as to hide under the couch so as not to disturb his sister. Only in the last chapter does Gregor reflect on his own desires and see the selfishness of his family. While both of the novellas 'The Doll Queen' and "Metamorphosis" present two different stories, they share a number of similar themes. Themes of alienation, whether it be emotional or physical, imprisonment and investigations of personal identity are all common to both stories. Through these themes, both of these stories entertain and provide inside into the human condition.