

"the other side of the
hedge" by e.m.
forster – analysis
essay sample



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“ The Other Side of the Hedge” by E. M. Forster – Analysis Essay Sample

In the first-person narrative, “ The Other side of the Hedge”, E. M. Forster depicts a man jogging through his neighbourhood. On the way home, he passes a hedge with a strange light shining out from behind it. He decides to explore the light and suddenly falls into a pool of water which he has not noticed. A man saves him and takes him to a land filled with peace and beauty. Eventually, the narrator realizes that he is actually dead. The man who is guiding him is his brother, and they are both together in heaven.

The theme of the story is that people’s desires to compete drive people to achieve their life goals. In the story, the narrator shows a strong passion to progress. Also, the story tells people that assisting others to succeed provides a far greater reward than satisfying ones’ selfish desires. Moreover, by mentioning that the unexpected friend helping out the man is actually his brother, the author suggests that the people you once leave behind are sometimes the ones that will not hesitate to help you in the end. Forster uses the hedge and water to illustrate the start of a new beginning. The story has a deep meaning which clearly shows a psychological hardship that we struggle everyday in choosing between two things. In those cases, people would see their true desires and sacrifices that they must leave behind. For instance, although the narrator wants to keep the old tradition as he hopes himself back to the old road, he still has to move on as everyone else continues to progress.

Furthermore, the story tells many ideas about life. The story shows life's process and the idea of passing by the people you know. It also shows that life is a race and the people that lose their stamina, or fall behind are left behind by those people who are still able to go on.

Symbolism plays an important role in the story. The author uses the road and the prison, the two extremes of life, to symbolize an interrelation between two oppositions. On the road, the road of life, people have to learn, develop or even struggle whereas on the other side of the hedge, it is a world without competing. By contrasting these two worlds, it indicates that people actually need to keep improving themselves during their lifetime. The pedometer is another symbol which measures life. The water in the moat represents purification and the hedge symbolizes the passage to afterlife. Happy people represent people who have no need for desires. The two gates, which the first gate symbolizes men's choice to take life on their own hands and the second gate symbolizes death.