

Ghosts by henrik ibsen

Family



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Human beings are constantly searching for their identity. Most of us end up being defined by our families, friends, and the expectations of society. However, some of us struggle more than others when we don't seem to connect with the community in which we have grown up. In Henrik Ibsen's "Ghost" Oswald Alving spends his entire life attempting to find his personal identity. In the end he discovers that he is his father's son and that he will always be dragged down by the demands of his society, but there is a way to escape.

Oswald was sent away at a very young age. His mother didn't want him to witness the lie that was her marriage. He found his passion in art, away from religion and the ideals of a perfect family. However, his roots eventually dragged him back to the place that would lead to his destruction. Oswald became very ill from a disease the doctor called "sins of the father". It is fair that a child must pay for his parents' sins, perhaps not, but they always do. As a result of Captain Alving's affair and lies Oswald had to give up art and the life he had made for himself.

Oswald returns home only to find out that he comes from a close-minded society where his passion is looked down upon. As time goes by and he loses every last memory there is of his father, he finds that life is meaningless. Due to the horrible weather and Pastor Manders' influence he is sucked into the puppet house, which he must call home. He pursues Regina in efforts to form a family and find happiness in the fog. However, Regina is his half-sister and while he didn't care about such details anymore, she did.

There was no more hope for him. He couldn't follow his dreams and he couldn't be the "right" kind of man. Ibsen's play proves that in order to

discover one's identity we must not let ourselves be bound by our surroundings. It is not about family, religion, or fabricated obligations. It is about what brings one to their happiest point. Oswald wasted his time searching for meaning in a life that wasn't meant for him and in the end the only escape from this was death.