

Bravery for protection
~ the kite runner
essay



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The definition of bravery in the Standard College Dictionary Canadian Edition is, “ the quality of mind or spirit enabling one to meet danger or opposition with fearlessness, calmness, and firmness. ” Bravery is a quality that is shown by many of the characters in the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. The characters are brave in their effort to protect physical well-being, personal values, their reputation and sanity.

In the novel the characters exhibit genuine bravery in order to guard the things important to them. Firstly, the characters in the novel display bravery as they protect one another from physical harm. This can be seen in patterns between generations in families. Early on the reader learns that Amir’s grandfather protects Ali by, “[adopting] him into his own household, and [telling] the other students to tutor him” (26). Since Ali’s parents were killed and he is a Hazaras he would have most certainly been discriminated against at an orphanage.

Ali is Hassan’s father. The reader learns near the end that he is not his biological father but he is the man who raised him. Hassan defends Amir from being beaten by Assef who has a reputation in Kabul of being a psychopath. When Assef threatens them Hassan does not hesitate to respond saying, “ You are right, Agha. But perhaps you didn’t notice that I’m the one holding the slingshot.

If you make a move, they’ll have to change your nickname from Assef ‘ the Ear Eater’ to ‘ One-Eyed Assef,’ because I have this rock pointed at your left eye” (45-46). Later on Amir stands up for Sohrab, Hassan’s son, as Hassan stood up for Amir countless times before. He demands to Assef, “ All I want is

the boy" (298), to take Sohrab to a safe place where he would no longer be sexually abused. In return, Sohrab is bold and prevents Amir from being slain. He points the slingshot at Assef's face, "' No more, Agha. Please,' he [says], his voice husky and trembling.

' Stop hurting him'" (304). At this point Assef is a grown man while Sohrab is only a boy. It would take plenty of courage to protect this man he did not even know. Sohrab's action fulfills the idea foreshadowed earlier of " one-eyed Assef" as Sohrab shoots a metal ball in Assef's eye. All these characters guarded the physical well-being of individuals that were important to them by demonstrating bravery. Furthermore, the characters in this novel are brave in order to protect personal values.

No matter the circumstances Hassan remains loyal to his best companion Amir numerous times through bravery. An example of this is when Hassan promises Amir that he would return the blue kite from the tournament that he won except there is an obstacle in the way. Assef wants the kite that Hassan caught but Hassan would not give it to him saying, " Amir agha won the tournament and I ran this kite for him. I ran it fairly. This is his kite" (77). Hassan is severely punished by Assef for his bravery and he sacrifices much for Amir.

In a similar situation, Hassan is bold to defend his loyalty to Amir in admitting to his master that he is a thief. This situation is explained by Amir as he says, " This [is] Hassan's final sacrifice for me. If he'd [says] no, Baba would have believed him because we all knew Hassan never lied. And if Baba [believes] him, then I'd be the accused; I would have to explain and I would

be revealed for what I really [am]" (111). Hassan did not steal anything but he is framed by Amir.

Still Hassan is brave as he sacrifices Baba's respect for him not only to protect loyalty but to protect Amir's relationship with his father. When Hassan is a grown man he is fearless to protect his loyalty to Rahim Khan. Rahim Khan explains to Amir, " The Talibs said he [is] a liar and a thief like all Hazaras and [orders] him to get his family out of the house by sundown. Hassan [protests]" (230).

Hassan stood up to the Taliban, sacrificing his life, to guard the home he promised to take care of to Rahim Khan. Similarly, Baba is audacious in risking his life in order to preserve common decency. A Russian soldier demands to have sex with a married Afghan woman in the back of the truck for the price of letting them pass into Pakistan. Baba resists responding, " Tell him I'll take a thousand of his bullets before I let this indecency take place," (122). Also Soraya is daring to protect honesty. Before Soraya and Amir are engaged she says, " You need to know.

I don't want us to start with secrets. And I'd rather you hear it from me" (173). Soraya comes out and tells the truth about her regrettable past to Amir to protect his right to know the truth. This is bravery because she faced the danger of Amir no longer wanting to marry her. Throughout most of the novel Amir does not display qualities of bravery but rather cowardice.

Despite the incredible examples of bravery he witnesses over the course of his life he only acts brave for others toward the end of the novel. Amir stands up to Assef to continue on Hassan's goodness and his values. Reflecting on <https://assignbuster.com/bravery-for-protection-the-kite-runner-essay/>

this he thinks, “ I remember how envious I’d been of Hassan’s bravery. Assef had backed down, promised that in the end he’d get us both. He’d kept that promise with Hassan.

Now it was my turn” Amir risked his life to continue on Hassan’s goodness in protecting his son Sohrab. (300). In each of these circumstances of bravery the characters are self-sacrificing and are putting others above themselves to uphold values of importance to them. In addition, Baba and Amir are brave to protect their reputation.

Amir is brave journeying to the war torn country of Afghanistan to protect his reputation of how Rahim Khan views him. “[His] suspicions [have] been right all those years. He [knows] about Assef, the kite, the money, the watch with the lightning bolt hands. He had always known” (202).

In addition, Baba is daring in accepting being poor and refuses to use food stamps. Baba goes to the welfare agency and “[drops] the stack of food stamps on her desk. “ Thank you but I don’t want,” Baba said. “ I work always. In Afghanistan I work, in America I work.

Thank you very much, Mrs. Dobbins, but I don’t like it free money” (138). He does this to protect his reputation with other Afghani people. Similarly, Baba says to the doctor, “ But no chemo medication for me” (165) as he is brave in accepting his death. He knows that he is going to die and there is really nothing to be done to prevent it. Chemotherapy would only prolong his life at his current poor state.

Baba does this to protect his reputation. Even though his body is weak, his mind is not. Baba and Amir are willing to risk life and health in order to guard their respectable reputation. The characters in the novel are brave in order to protect their sanity and the sanity of others. Baba takes risks in order to protect his conscience from incredible guilt from sleeping with a married Hazara woman.

He is brave to protect his sanity. Amir says, " Sometimes, I think everything he did, feeding the poor on the streets, building the orphanage, giving money to friends in need, it was all his way of redeeming himself" (316). Amir following in his father's footsteps also does things he regrets. He allows his best friend to be raped.

Seeing Hassan everyday makes him feel guilty so he, "[asks] Baba if he'd ever consider getting new servants. " This is self-motivated bravery as he bold in confronting his father. As an adult, Amir is brave in risking everything in order to make right the things he does wrong in his past. He does this to protect his sanity. Rahim Kahn says to Amir when he gets to Pakistan, " Sohrab is a gifted little boy.

We can give him a new life here, new hope, with people who would love him" (233). Amir has an opportunity to protect Sohrab's sanity and also make right his previous wrongs. Amir responds, " I have a wife in America, a home, a career, and a family. Kabul is a dangerous place, you know that, and you'd have me risk everything for...

" (233) him. Amir does decide to risk all of this and face the uncertainties of Kabul to protect Sohrab's future well-being. Amir and Baba are both brave in

taking risks in order to atone for the damaging things they did in their past.

In the novel the characters show qualities of bravery in order to protect various things of importance. They are brave to protect physical well-being, to protect personal values, to protect their reputation and to protect sanity.

The emphasis put on bravery in the novel allows the reader to connect with the characters and be challenged to stand firm for things that are valuable to them.