

On the sidewalk bleeding

[Literature](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ On The Sidewalk Bleeding” by Evan Hunter is a short story, written in third person omniscient, about a 16-year-old boy, Andy, and his last moments before he dies after being stabbed by his rival gang, the Guardians. He reflects on his identity as a Royal gang member and how the only reason he is dying now is because of his Royals jacket. He realizes nobody really knows Andy, but they all know him as a Royal. Nobody helps him in the alley because they either don't acknowledge him or don't help him because of his jacket. He uses his last bit of strength before he dies to part with his jacket and takes it off, noticing he hasn't really lived his life all because of it. The main focus of this story is appearance vs. reality. Reality can be harsh and unendurable for many, including Andy. Andy struggles to find out his true identity, so he becomes apart of a gang, known as the Royals. Andy presents himself as a tough and unbreakable person when he's dying, but ends up becoming soft and angered on how he wasted his life on being something that he isn't: “ I can't be dying, not from a little street rumble, not from just being cut. Guys get cut all the time in rumbles. I can't be dying. No, that's stupid.

That don't make any sense at all [...] He [...] wondered why the rumbles and the jumps and the purple jackets had always seemed so important to him before. Now they seemed like such small things in a world he was missing, a world that was rushing past at the other end of the alley. I don't want to die, he thought. I haven't lived yet” (Hunter, 2 5). I sometimes have problems being myself around others and struggle to fit in, so I pretend to be someone else. This makes me feel like it gives me the appearance that I fit in with society when in reality, does anyone really fit in? I sometimes spend my life

doing what others want, and then I wonder later why I spent a long time focusing on that because I need to spend my one life doing what I love, not what others want me to do. I am usually able to change that about my life before it's too late, but that wasn't the case of Andy. Andy's jacket to me represents what others see, almost like a protective cover from the true him and he, as a person, represents what he hides from the world. His jacket also reminds me of how some girls use makeup to cover up their true selves to appear the way they think that society will accept them. In this story, Andy reminds me of Johnny in "The Outsiders" by SE Hilton. Johnny and Andy both lost their life from an opposing gang (Johnny was traumatized and scared while Andy on the other hand literally died) and they both lived their lives without truly living it, appearing different to the world than how they really are. They both accepted their death and dealt with it themselves. Andy and Johnny also realize near the end of their life that they need to be more 'them' and less like they are to the world. They live their last moments being brave, despite the pain and suffering that comes from it. Johnny dies showing his true self by helping save others in a fire while Andy dies after revealing his true self by removing his jacket: "Pain ripped fire across his body whenever he moved. But he squirmed and fought and twisted until one arm was free and then the other. He rolled away from the jacket" (Hunter 5). The difference between Johnny and Andy though is Johnny died to help others and showing his true self, while Andy died being someone he isn't. This shows the impact that society has on others and how people may appear one way, but in reality are sometimes completely different than what you expect.

Andy appeared to everyone except Laura as a Royal, not Andy, and that changed everyone's thoughts and perspectives on him as a person. In my opinion, this shows how much a small decision, like hanging out with the wrong people, can change everyone's perspective on you, making you appear different than who you really are. This story makes me realize that I can't live my life being someone who I'm not to be seen as 'cool' or 'popular' to others. I feel like it is important to reflect upon what you are doing with your life every once in a while because you never know what can happen in your life, so while we're still healthy and well, we need to spend this time living our lives to the best of our ability. I feel like this story is similar to our world being caught up in social media and our phones because we are creating a different appearance for the world to see online and spend so much time in trying to get more likes and followers and watching other people's lives when I feel like we should spend time living our lives, not texting them, because our families and real-life friends know who we truly are, and their opinions are the only ones that truly matter.