

# The apprenticeship of duddy

Literature



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The portrait of Duddy is ambiguous: he is neither good nor bad but very human. In 'The apprenticeship of Duddy', Duddy is portrayed as an independent, elusive, plotting, ingenious and deceitful Jewish boy. He is grown up with uncaring, manipulating and money seeking attitude. Most of the time it seemed that nobody cared for him except his grandfather Simcha.

When Duddy returns from work he asks his father that why didn't Max answer his letters on which his father says that he wasn't "one for letters." Many times in the story it is clear that Duddy did not receive the same kind of love as Max and Lennie received, from his father and uncle. But Duddy remembered that when Lennie had worked as a camp counselor one summer his father had written every week. He had driven out to visit him twice. Everyone except his grandfather thought that Duddy was going to be nobody. This might be the reason behind the making of his character. He wanted to prove everyone that he was worth making lots of money and this made him power hungry too.

He wanted to show that he can have power and money on his abilities and just because of earning more power and money he did not give importance to human feelings and never thought of their's feelings. He has never experienced love and true friendship since childhood and the gang he made during school days was based on respect and not on friendship. Duddy remembered his grandfather's words, "a man without land is nobody" and since he received affection from his grandfather alone he took his words to heart.

Duddy had the impression that to gain a higher step in society he should purchase as much land as he can. Duddy lost his innocence and because he

didn't get appropriate love in childhood he grows up to be a corrupt and immoral man. His only target in life seemed to get as much money and power as possible so that he proves his efficiency to all in his family. This gives the impression that he is neither good nor bad but just because he wants to prove his identity his behavior is humanly.

Duddy has chosen a life without consciousness or integrity and because of the target he has in mind he does not think twice before hurting people and this shows the deterioration of his temperament. Duddy is grown up in a poor part of Montreal where people lived with almost no or less hopes and here Duddy wants to prove himself. He even steals money from his friend and admirer, Virgil to pay for the final installment of the land. The only thing in Duddy's mind is to have power and high status in society and for which he is ready to drive on any path.

He is not in a position to think about morality or goodness and works whimsically. Lack of love at the time of childhood and his intension to gain attention from his father and uncle has changed his nature and he is no more pure and innocent. He can go to any extent and even steals money just to gain power and money and to prove that he is worth love and respect. Duddy is willing to do anything to get money and power. He also takes advantage of his friend Virgil when he steals money from Virgil's account. Duddy took a quick look at Virgil's bank balance, whistled noted his account number and ripped out two cheques.

He forged the signature by holding the cheque and a letter Virgil signed up to the window and tracing slowly. Later it is seen that Simcha, Duddy's grandfather looks at him in shame because he has given away morality for <https://assignbuster.com/the-apprenticeship-of-duddy/>

mere destructive materialistic values. Simcha knows that the respect Duddy is receiving is not because of his heart but only because of his money and power. And for Simcha money is not everything. He believed in Duddy because he wanted him to succeed in life but not on the cost of his morality and goodness.

Simcha's words had deep impact on young Duddy's mind but when he gains respect from public he loses that too in Simcha's eyes. Duddy feels but does not care for it and thinks that everything will turn out good. This is the change that is seen in his character and this shows that when he gains power and respect he does not even care for his grandfather and his love. But when one sees with the eyes of Duddy, it is quite natural because if a child is hungry for power and respect from his very childhood, the only thing that matters for him is to achieve that.

So Duddy's character is designed from his childhood and he grows up to be neither good nor bad but since he has the feeling of success and wants to get it at any cost, he is absolutely human. Duddy becomes a man who does not understand the difference between good and bad and his conscious feels nothing. He eventually loses the meaning of respect and generosity. Simcha's cynical words gained Duddy land, money and power but made him a heartless man and a criminal too.