

# Metamorphosis by franz kafka essay

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



The Dream that Gregor has is the background upon which the story is told therefore bringing to attention the use of a dream in Franz Kafka's story Metamorphosis. Metamorphosis is thought to occur in insects and it signifies their growth from one stage to the next which necessitates that the insect changes in physical form through the stages it goes through until it reaches maturity.

Metamorphosis in the context of Franz Kafka, illustrates the transformation of the Main character Gregor from a normal human being into a bug (Kafka 5). That is the point which Gregor's misfortunes begin. But in the long run the transformation that is seen is that of the whole family and not just Gregor.

They are able to go out and work and even afford to go for a trip in the countryside and eventually they are able to sell the apartment they used together with Gregor, something that had not happened before. This can be seen as the major transformation and metamorphosis in the story. By using Gregor, Kafka symbolizes the whole family in general and the changes that take place therein upon Gregor's metamorphosis.

Gregor is portrayed as a responsible young man who works to take care of his family when his father loses his grip on his business and therefore Gregor has to work to settle what his father owes his boss. This portrays him as one who is caring and concerned about the family's well being. He does not like his job as a salesman but has got to do it for the family's sake (Kafka9). The family has got savings that it can use but instead he is the one who takes full responsibility of their livelihood.

On the contrary, with what has befallen him, no one is really concerned about him except Grete who brings him food and cleans his room. There is a great contrast between the love that Gregor has for his family and that the family has for him after he has turned into a roach. It is also ironical that before the transformation his family is the most important thing to him but after the transformation the family does not seem to view him as important (Kafka 16).

It is evident in the story that it is Gregor who works to take care of his family and therefore the rest of the family members did not. But in the event that the metamorphosis takes place, everyone is forced to work thus bringing out the metamorphosis in the family. In his stupor (Kafka 17), Gregor is relieved that at least his family has some money to use in regard to his helpless situation now that he was the sole provider.

His love for his parents and sister does not change even in his present state, though it is portrayed by the family's actions that it is their love for him that has changed. For example by stuffing his room with furniture from the other rooms that have been taken up by lodgers, it is clear that his comfort does not matter to them. They even feed him with left over food and behave as if he does not exist any more in their lives. At the end of the day it is clear that they are the reason for his death.

Gregor's metamorphosis is therefore the turning point in the family's way of life. He turns out to be the one who is dependent on the other family members. Initially, the family depended on him. Upon returning from the force, Gregor takes up the family responsibility of breadwinner.

It is also ironic that he takes up the role when his father is still there. His eventual state of being can signify the death of the parasitic nature of all the characters, starting with his family members and extending to the lodgers. Gregor gives up and succumbs and this changes the tune of events about the family's way of life the story.

There is a prevailing conflict between father and son. Instead of father being in charge, he subjects his son of the role of working to pay for his debts. He does not even tell the family that he had not lost all his wealth. Instead he is on the receiving end and he takes up the position of son as his son takes the role of father. It comes to Gregor's attention that his family still had some wealth when he was already a roach. It is therefore portrayed that Mr. Samsa was using his son for his own benefit.

Having been subjected to do the job of a salesman which of course he did not like, it is very unfair because this is seen as enslavement for the sake of his family yet it is unappreciated, more especially with view of his father's character and attitude. He could have easily got out of the enslaving job had he known what was happening. His sacrifice for his family goes unappreciated at the end.

Tension between father and son, or rather with the rest of the family members is on the rise. When Gregor makes an appearance before his father, he throws an apple his direction and hurts him. In spite of his physical appearance, everyone, including his father knows that the roach in there is Gregor (Kafka 34). That notwithstanding, he hits him and injures him, his

own son. This shows that Gregor is not considered part of the family anymore.

He is seen more of an outsider, an ugly roach that should not show up in the family gathering. Gregor is neglected. There is no effort whatsoever to help and revive Gregor. With the turn of events that Gregor is a human being no more; his family does not take any initiative to help him regain his normal human self. Instead, even his room is not tidied up and feeding him is quite a problem.

His family can be said to be the reason for his death. Instead of helping bring him back to normalcy, they show no interest at all. When he shows up when Grete is playing the violin, everyone seems disgusted of his presence and therefore slams the door before his very face and thereafter he takes his last breath and dies (Kafka 26).

The metamorphosis is an awakening call for the whole family. They come to realize of how much they rely on Gregor. They are sad at first but they have no choice but to go fourth and look for other ways of helping themselves. They come to see Gregor (Kafka 30) as a burden and eventually yearn to get rid of him. In the first place the family was not used to having Gregor round. He was away before the metamorphosis.

All they were interested in was his financial assistance, that is why they looked up to him, but when this help is not forthcoming and he is a roach, he is better kept away so that they live as if he were not there just like when he was away before the metamorphosis. The metamorphosis helps bring out the

kind of relationships that existed within the family, more especially between Gregor and the other family members. The family members feel a bit relieve with the death of the roach.

In this kind of fiction, Kafka seeks to deal with family relations and roles of family members. Alienation that exists when life takes on different turn than it is expected not only in the family level but also in society in general. Kafka also seeks to bring to the reader's attention how disability can change ones life.

His state being changed to that of a dependant through disability, Gregor's problems multiplied therefore even costing him his life. His family made it even worse thus rendered him useless in their face (Kafka 47). The plight of the bedridden is seen to be problematic as shown though the protagonist Gregor as brought fourth by Kafka.

Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*. Whitefish, U. S. A. Publishing. 204. Pp. 1 – 48.