

A transformation of character of guy montag

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Montag's Metamorphosis

In the beginning of " Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury, Guy Montag is at first shown as a bad person, however it is simply the times he lives in that makes him seem this way. Throughout this book he slowly changes to being confused about what is right and wrong, and eventually to doing the thing which he knows is right. He starts out as a Fireman, although not the kind you normally think of, in his time there is a ban on the ownership of any books and his job is to go out and burn them when they are found. He soon finds that things are not as good as they seem and that sometimes following orders is not always the right choice when the people giving them are unjust or corrupt.

In the Beginning of the book Montag just blindly follows what he is told, and while he does have a feeling that things are not right he does not act on them. " It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed. With the brass nozzle in his fists, with this great python spitting its venomous kerosene on the world" (3). This shows that he is just enjoying the act of burning things because the firemen told him to do it. He is not questioning whether it is the right thing to do or thinking of the possible negative side effects of a world without books. When They get back to the fire house after the burning Bradbury describes how habitual Montag's actions are, and how he doesn't even have to think while doing them. " He hung up his black beetle-colored helmet and shined it; he hung his flameproof jacket neatly; he showered luxuriously, and then, whistling, hands in pockets, walked across the upper floor of the fire station and fell

down the hole. At the last moment, when disaster seemed positive, he pulled his hands from his pockets and broke his fall by grasping the golden pole. He slid to a squeaking halt, the heels one inch from the concrete floor downstairs" (4). This shows that he does the same thing day in and day out. This causes him to do things without thinking about them, and thus do them without questioning whether he truly believes they are the right thing to do. This can be a very dangerous quality and can lead to many destructive things happening with little or no resistance against them.

Just a little bit into the book Montag meets a young woman named Clarisse McClellan, and she is the one who makes him start questioning if what he does is right. She begins asking him questions And she asked him if he was happy, he had a confused response. " ' Am I What?' he cried. But she was gone-running into the moonlight. Her front door shut gently. ' Happy! Of all the nonsense'"(10). This shows that he is so brainwashed into doing his job that he had never even thought about if he was happy doing his job. If he had thought about his job and what he was doing he should have at least had some idea, whether it was a yes or a no. The second thing that changed Montag was when his wife overdosed on sleeping pills. Two men came to pump her stomach and when he realized they were not acting professional and that they were not doctors he asked them why doctors were not sent, and they said " We get these cases nine or ten a night. Got so many, starting a few years ago, we had special machines built. With the optical lens, of course, that was new; the rest is ancient. You don't need an M. D., case like this" (16). After hearing this Montag realizes that human lives are being valued less in the new society and that this is a problem that he had never

thought of before. The last big thing that changed him was when he went to another call for the firemen and he saw a woman go to kill herself rather than lose her precious collection of books. After covering all the books and most of the house with kerosene they were trying to convince the woman to leave but instead she made a move nobody expected. " She opened the fingers of one hand slightly and in the palm of the hand was a single slender object. An ordinary kitchen match. [...] the woman on the porch reached out with contempt to them all and struck the kitchen match against the railing" (41-42). This showed Montag that books could be so meaningful to people that keeping them are worth their lives. This was really the final straw in Montag's change.

After all that he has gone through Montag no longer follows what people tell him blindly and he is free thinking for the first time throughout the story. Montag shows his secret stash of books to Millie and when she freaks out what he says really shows his new character, he says " We can't burn these. I want to look at them, at least look at them once. Then if what the Captain says is true, we'll burn them together, believe me" (71). Here Montag clearly shows that he is thinking for himself and not following what people tell him to do, this is a huge change in his character. Later after he has read some of the books he knows he has to turn one back in to the fire captain but he doesn't know which one, he said " It might be the last copy in this part of the world[...] I don't think he knows which book I stole. But how do I choose a substitute? Do I turn in Mr. Jefferson? Mr. Thoreau? Which is least valuable? If I pick a substitute and Beatty does know which book I stole, he'll guess we've an entire library here!" (82). Here Montag is thinking very logically and

doing everything he can to preserve the book. This is something he would have never done at the beginning of the book. However Montag's True rebellious nature truly come out with a plan created by him and Faber, in Faber's words the plan is " the fireman structure itself could be burnt. Now, if you suggest that we print extra books and arrange to have them hidden in firemen's houses all over the country, so that seeds of suspicion would be sown among these arsonists" (93). This shows Montag taking it a step farther than just thinking for himself and actually rebelling against the group of people he was once a part of because he now knows that what they do is wrong.

Montag undergoes a metamorphosis from a person who is naive and simply follows orders to a rebellious man who fights for what he believes in throughout this book. This is a major change and shows that people truly can make drastic changes in their life if people simply make their own decisions instead of the ones that people around them are making. Montag's change is for