

# Surpassing the past

patrick coutts  
hammond

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



| Grade 11 University English ISU Essay | | Patrick Coutts Due: December 19, 2012 | ENG3U1-04 | Jack Hammond | Surpassing The Past Patrick Coutts Hammond/ENG3U1-04 December 19, 2012 A strong, healthy relationship between a father and son allows for a happy family and lifetime. In *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini illustrates the fragile relationship between Baba and Amir and how easily a third party could affect the relationship. Amir can now transcend his relationship with his father by confronting his past, locating his courage and portraying his redemption. Amir confronting his past allows him to transcend his relationship with his father. Amir first attempts to confront his past by travelling to Afghanistan. Amir must confront his memories of the horrible things that he created. Amir forced Ali and Hassan out of his house and more importantly, out of his life. This is a desperate attempt to become closer to Baba. To confront his past, Amir must remember Hassan and remember what they used to share. Amir referred to the letter Hassan wrote for him, and remembered " Hassan had said in his letter that the pomegranate tree hadn't borne fruit in years. Looking at the wilted, leafless tree, I doubted it ever would again. I stood under it, remembered all the times we'd climbed it, straddled its branches, our legs swinging, dappled sunlight flickering through the leaves and casting on our faces as a mosaic of light and shadow. The tangy taste of pomegranate crept into my mouth. " (Hosseini 276-277). The pomegranate tree represents Hassan and Amir's friendship. When Hassan and Amir were good, happy and caring friends, the tree produced delicious fruit. Now that Hassan and Amir have not been friends for many years, the tree is wilted and all life from the leaves have disappeared. The tree will no longer produce any fruit and Amir and Hassan

will not have anymore chances to become friends again, but Amir can repay Hassan. Another reason that Amir went back to Afghanistan was to rescue Sohrab; Hassan's son. This was Rahim Khan's dying wish. Amir is confronting his past by fighting for his friend's loved one. Amir is confronting the fact that even though he cannot face Hassan, he will face his son. This is the way Amir will be good again. Rahim Khan knows how Amir can fix his problems, Rahim also knows that " There is a way to be good again" (Hosseini 202). Rahim Khan's way to be good again for Amir is to rescue Sohrab. Rahim knows this act will be very beneficial for Amir's future. In Amir's childhood, he also had to deal with bullies and in that regard, Assef was the major antagonist. Even when Assef is older, he is still a problem in Amir's life. Assef is part of the Taliban, terrorizing many people. Amir was face to face with his bully and when he discovered that Assef was abusing Sohrab, Amir spoke his mind and confronted Assef on how horrible he has become. Amir was furious, he had to confront Assef and stand up for what he believes is right, because he knows "'Stoning adulterers? [.] Raping children? [.] Flogging women for wearing high heels? [.] Massacring Hazaras? [.]'" (Hosseini 297-298). These things should not be allowed to continue without any punishment to the person causing them, in this case, Assef. Amir has confronted his past and is now able to move onto his other problems, problems he has with his father. Amir has to locate his courage so he can face all of his other problems with confidence. While Amir was in Afghanistan, trying to find Sohrab, he tried looking in a local orphanage since Sohrab's parents had been murdered. When Amir arrived at the orphanage, he asks for Sohrab. The man who runs the orphanage (Zaman) claims to not know of Sohrab. Amir pushes and

pushes for Zaman to tell him where Sohrab is. Finally, it is revealed that Zaman sells children to the Taliban. Amir had to locate his courage to tell this man what he was doing wrong. Amir sees this act as greed in order to receive money. Zaman told Amir that "[t]here is a Talib official," he muttered. "He visits once every month or two. He brings cash with him...." "Usually he'll take a girl. But not always." "And you allow this?" (Hosseini 268). Amir confronts Zaman because he found the courage to speak what was on his mind and what he believes in. Amir has never been in a fight because he always had Hassan to protect him. Now that Amir did not have Hassan anymore, Amir was challenged to fight Assef to save Sohrab. Amir found the courage he needed because he knew he was finally going to get what he deserved. Sohrab was worth fighting for. Assef has a principle he follows, nothing was free, he demonstrates that Amir have Sohrab for free because everything comes with a price. As Amir tries to take Sohrab, Assef challenges "I didn't say you could take him for free." I turned. "What do you want?" "You have to earn him." (Hosseini 300). Amir fought Assef to prove a point and so he could finally stand up for what he believes in and that took courage. Baba always stands up for what he believes in, Amir admired that. When Amir stands up for what he believes in, he is transcending his relationship with Baba. Amir wants to adopt Sohrab, but when Amir arrives at the American Embassy, he soon finds out that it will be tough to adopt him. Amir finds out he will need a good immigration lawyer to be able to adopt Sohrab. Amir learns of this difficulty that will come with the adoption, but he needs clarification, he asks the worker "You mean to pursue this? ..... Then I advise you to get a good immigration lawyer." (Hosseini 348). Amir was

given a warning about his challenging future endeavor. He needs to adopt Sohrab. Going through this process to get Sohrab requires courage, Amir is ready to take on these responsibilities. At last, Amir is "good again." (Hosseini 202). Amir portrays many emotions, feelings and states of mind when he returns back to America: happiness, cheer, compassion and most importantly, redemption. Without even knowing it, Amir becomes a role model. Amir models how to fix mistakes and also how to treat one another. This is how Amir portrays his redemption. Amir teaches equality, these are his new beliefs. Amir stands up for his beliefs because Amir is a new man. Amir taught this lesson to General Taheri: "' And one more thing, General Sahib,' I said. ' You will never again refer to him [Sohrab] as a ' Hazara boy' in my presence. He has a name and it's Sohrab.'" (Hosseini 380). This passage from the novel contributes to Amir's ability and process of transcending his relationship with Baba. Amir is not himself anymore, he is acting and portraying someone else he knew who has a better relationship with Baba. Amir is portraying Hassan's way of life: forgiveness, loyalty, affection, empathy, and more. The most dominant expression that Amir is portraying, is redemption. Amir portrays his redemption by being loyal. Loyalty was a principle in Hassan's life. Amir showed his new found loyalty to Sohrab by stating the same words Hassan spoke to Amir to show his loyalty towards Amir, ' "For you, a thousand times over"' (Hosseini 391). Amir grew a new, deeper connection than being friends with Hassan; Hassan's loyalty lives on through Amir. This allows Amir to leave Baba and his relationship because he is now a new man. Amir remembers that he has been redeemed because he has a life changing event, he is thankful for this. Amir now knows

what it takes to redeem himself and this way, he is more forgiving of others. Since Baba lied to Amir and hid the truth about Hassan and Amir being half brothers, he could see past that because he has transcended his relationship with Baba. Amir remembers his redemption by remembering the person who allowed him to redeem himself, Hassan. Sohrab would always be told about what his father and Amir had shared, this is how Amir connected to Sohrab. Sohrab was told about Hassan and Amir's kite fighting experiences; ' "Watch, Sohrab. I'm going to show you one of your father's favorite tricks, the old lift-and-dive.'" (Hosseini 389). As this plan helps remind to remind Amir of his journey, it also makes Sohrab feel more comfortable around Amir because Sohrab now knows that his father shared something special with Amir. Amir also helps Sohrab remember his father in this same way. By Amir portraying Hassan, he is portraying his redemption and transcends his relationship with Baba. Throughout *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini demonstrates the fragile relationship between Baba and Amir and how easily a third party could affect the relationship. Amir is now able to transcend his relationship with his father by confronting his past, locating his courage and portraying his redemption. This process of Amir transcending his relationship with Baba allows Amir to withhold a new relationship between an uncle and nephew. Also illustrated in this novel is a strong, growing relationship between an uncle nephew can last a lifetime if happiness, loyalty, affection and compassion are present in the relationship. This theory holds true to life and does not just live in a novel. Works Cited and Works Consulted Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. N. p.: Anchor Canada, 2004. Print.