

# Brideshead revisited



A twitch upon the thread-each of us sometimes feels being tied to some kind of thread, invisible one and there is someone on the other end of it who twitches this thread when it's necessary.

The thing is how far each of us can go away to feel it or how far God can permit us go away wondering before twitching it. God sees everything and never will leave someone who need his help, who tries to preserve something really valid in his soul, just the thread can be of different length. In " Brideshead Revisited" by Evelyn Waugh the idea of the " thread" is rather good highlighted . The story affects a misleading attitude of indifference, which neither condemn nor sanction any conduct or behavior that takes place.

The fond of the novel is religious. The plot is a nostalgic story based on thememoriesof the main characters who had been a wealthy English Catholicfamily. In England where most people are Protestant, being Catholic makes the family despite their ownership and high social status, a subject of prejudice.

But in the world of English upper-class, in this world itself a lot of sins and defects can be seen. The life of wealthy students in Oxford is full of self-indulgence and irresponsibility. Here, Charles Ryder first meets Sebastian Flyte who searches forhappinessand self in this world but he can't find it. So, he tries to escape in alcohol and denial of faith.

The novel " Brideshead Revisited" is the moral story which shows us what usually happens when the material things of the world loose their attractiveness and sense, when one, finally, has to take a look inside his soul and seeing nothing there becomes struck and scared. In such situation it's <https://assignbuster.com/brideshead-revisited/>

hard to preserve one's spiritual values and frequently a person can't find the way out.

That's what is happening with Sebastian. The God permits one to go far away from him, even to escape, to hide himself somewhere but the tread between him and the individual could be still very long. It can be so long as God wants.

The unique person who can cut it is the person itself. The individual can cut this thread by his total indifference, by absence of his proper desire to correct, to change something in his life. But still one continues looking at his soul searching for something better there, this thread will be permanent and our task is to be aware of this twitching when we loose control.

During his first visit to Marchmain family's residence, Charles Ryder is struck by the moral tragedy of a family -with their desire to appear traditional and socially accepted in the "correct" circle.

Lady Marchmain commands abidance to Catholicism among four very different children. She controls over her children using her charm, piety and the religious doctrine which is unquestionable for her. The elder son, Brideshead is pious and conservative and narrow-minded. Julia is a contemporary woman, smart and very beautiful. She is portrayed as a complex young woman who must reject her faith to marry. She eventually finds herself disappointed with her choice of a husband and is left wondering how life could be so bad.

Cordelia is the youngest of the Marchmain children. She is too young and devout of faith to fully understand her brother's dilemma. Cordelia also

seems too young to be aware of her mother's need to control, but after Lady Marchmain dies, Cordelia confides to Charles that her mother was saintly but she wasn't a saint and when people wanted to hate God, they hated her mother. There is a resigned acceptance at her inability to love her mother and of the lapse of faith of her father, sister and beloved brother. In this case it can be seen perfectly well how the beauty and charm of upper-class life can destroy relationship, the life of a family.

Charles, the upper-middleclass Oxford student sees that there is more to Oxford life than mere study. He likes the upper-class and, naturally, he wants to be part of it. He likes its charm and splendor but at the same time he sees a great hole in Sebastian's soul when he meets him.

The author gives us the description of the eventual downfall of the youngest son Sebastian, whose burden is to confront his disillusionment with his faith, with his morally incorruptible mother. Sebastian is a lonely soul, he uses his religion as a toy and all the time feels the strange conflict in his soul. Charles and Sebastian became inseparable and lived life at Oxford to the full, but Charles realized that Sebastian drank not because of an excess of high spirits or enjoy but to escape. He looks for love but struggles with homosexuality.

He has no truly romantic relationships with either a man or a woman until Charles arrives. Charles isn't homosexual but he can see Sebastian's tragedy. Sebastian's deepdepressionand inner battle to reconcile his beliefs with his mother's expectations of him are exemplified by the conversation between two young men in the colonnade with the papers. Sebastian couldn't find true solace in his relationship with Charles because he

perceived that Charles couldn't understand the gravity of his dilemma, despite their mutual love.

Waugh portrays Charles as a irreligious person and this makes Sebastian's dilemma deeper. The chasm between unaffected by religion and the need to be devout of faith is too wide to be bridged for these two young men. Sebastian escapes but he escapes from himself, he can't find something that would calm him though he has everything. His inner desire for God , for real love doesn't permit him to dissolve completely in the world of false feelings. And that is that so-called thread of God , unseen hook that he can twitch when someone escapes too far.

The thing is not each of us pays attention to this kind of control. We are sure that we are all right and everything we are doing is perfect and correct and , frequently, people go on doing what is correct to their opinion making this thread longer and longer. In the novel by Evelyn Waugh it can be seen very well.

Julia agonises over her marriage to a colonial who doesn't understand the devotion to the church which he consider to encourage the perpetuation of guilt for its own purposes. But finally she is disappointed like her brother Sebastian.

With all of these examples Waugh tries to explain that whatever we do, it can't avoid the evaluation of God. No one can break the link communicating his soul with God and leave in this way without problems. God won't let them go too far..

These words are emblematic of all this novel. Among thousands of problems and troubles, among millions of different people exist also the threads of God and if somebody has preserved in his soul the inward desire to God and his call to us in Christ and His Church, so God will catch him “ with an unseen hook and an invisible line which is long enough to let him wander to ends of the world and still to bring him back with a twitch upon the thread”. 1

It's hard to speak about approval of one of the character's conduct. Sebastian was too young to admit his mother's doctrines without protest, his mother was too devoted to faith and didn't pay much attention to her children's feelings and deathbed conversion also isn't too good a way to express one's point of view. It's necessary to express everything during its life and this life must be lived according to the law of God without paying much attention if you are a Catholic or a Protestant. Threads of God are equal for everybody.

1. Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*(Paperback, 1999), p. 189

#### Bibliography

1. Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*(Paperback, 1999).