

On the sidewalk bleeding. essay



**ASSIGN
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' On the Sidewalk Bleeding' by Evan Hunter deals with the important human issue of death, Hunter portrays the main character's (Andy) journey to cope with his soon-to-be death through techniques such as; themes, plot, word choice and repetition. The base of the plot evolves around a boy called Andy who is stabbed by a rival gang – he is left alone to die as he watches a selection of personalities pass him by, and remains unaided. The character himself is important in discussion of how the issue of death is coped within the story.

Andy is just 16-years-old, and yet he belongs to a gang, ' The Royals'. This allows Andy the chance to view himself as quite the hard man, however, when Andy realises death is near, he sheds the ' Royal' in him and becomes a much more emotional Andy. This would appear to be his chosen way of coping. Andy wants to die as Andy, " If he ever did another thing he would take off the jacket. " – He also seems to realise how much he will miss his girlfriend Laura, we can assume this is unusual, " He suddenly hungered for Laura's mouth. It was then that he wondered if he would ever kiss Laura again. This shows that aspects of Andy's character are important to him in coping with his death. The plot is equally important as the character however as it shows us that he is forced to deal with death, he has 3 chances, and all 3 seem to slip away. The first comes in the form of a drunk man who seems to not even notice Andy's predicament. " What's the matter Buddy? " – this falls in with the theme of the world passing him by, not really noticing Andy. He is disappointed again when the man leaves, still oblivious to what is going on, " S'long Buddy. Not long after, Andy watches a second opportunity die when a young couple find him – " He's a Royal" – but are too scared of what

the Guardians (rival gang) will do if they help a Royal that they walk away, “ If we get a cop, the Guardians’ll find out who. ” – “ I’m sorry. ” The final chance for Andy arrives with an old lady, who fails to notice Andy at all, “ She did not hear Andy because she was a little deaf and because the rain was beating on the cans. ” – She simply leaves. The curtain closes when Andy dies, but as a Royal, not as Andy. “ A Royal, huh? – “ His name is Andy. ” – “ A Royal. “. Word choice is used in all literature, but Evan Hunter is very commendable for it. He manages to increase the plot understanding with words like ‘ springing’ – showing that the tears were almost instant in Laura’s eyes. He shows that Andy copes with death by concentrating on any relief possible. For example, when Andy is stabbed he states “ the comparative relief as the blade was pulled free” – this shows that although it still hurt, Andy focuses on the ‘ comparative’ relief as a part of his coping methods.

Hunter also manages to highlight the idea of him dying by using repetition, repeating words such as ‘ dying’, ‘ bleeding’ and ‘ pain’ on a regular basis – this helps to promote the fact that Andy is dying. As well as the idea of his death, Hunter also circles the idea of Andy’s death being prolonged – “ waiting, waiting”, the idea that time moved slowly for Andy, “ ticking, ticking”. It is vital however that we also look at how Andy fails to deal or cope with his looming death. “ It was 11: 13 pm. But he did not know the time. ” – this suggests that Andy is so deluded that time simply becomes of no interest to him.

Early on in the story we also see that Andy does not (at first) realise he is dying, he thinks everything will simply work out, “ He did not know he was dying”. Based on the evidence presented, we can see that Hunter has

successfully used theme, plot, word choice, repetition and character to show how Andy deals and copes with the important human issue of death.

Especially the way in which he connects them, with the theme of life carrying on without him, mingling with techniques such as the plot, where the main events all seem to support this view.