

Tooth and claw

Literature



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Is happiness determined by environment? 'Tooth and claw' is a short story by T. C. Boyle that is summarized as a story of a supposedly young man referred to as Junior in first person point of view. Other characters by the name of Cat and Daria are associated with this main persona. Junior is portrayed as very ambitious guy but in real sense he lacks a sense of life direction and motivation to achieve these elite desires. Daria on the other hand is this beautiful young lady with signs of life successes, the same age group with Junior in college that hangs around Junior's life. Cat is simply the animal the name refers to. One of the best themes and question that come out clear from this amazing story is, can life happiness be determined by the environments ones in?

From a real influential champions perspective, a true winner and leader solves his problems by not running away from them as an excuse to find a new winning ground elsewhere which in most cases never turns out victorious. Junior is keen to blame his unhappiness and lack of life accomplishment on his immediate environmental surroundings as shown by Boyle where he moves to California because it's ambitious driven similar to his desires (Gleason 12). He is disgusted by his small hometown because it has a small-time setting for "losers" whereby he described it's full of old men who are mere drunks with no sense of direction in their lives thus the reason why he does not want to be associated with his own home town: "I had no intention of becoming a drunk like all the hard-assed old men in the shopping mall-blighted town I grew up in, silent men with hate in their eyes and complaint eating away at their insides-like my own dead father" (Boyle 206). Junior could show more substance if he would have hinted that he would rather come after getting his college education he would come back <https://assignbuster.com/tooth-and-claw/>

and impact his hometown with a positive difference and technically change lives of this so called drunks by giving them more purpose in their lives. Happiness only holds ground if one cordially appreciates what he or she has at the present moment and the ability to make the most out of the immediate surroundings, seeing more positive than negative or stop with the future hopes of becoming happy when you will achieve something that is materialistic or money related. Junior complains about everything in life because of his current financial status that does not appear to give him his entire ego based life desires. Daria on the other hand portrays this content lady who is ready to make the most out of her life, when she visits and finds Junior's house untidy she quickly cleans it further insinuating she was making a home experience for the cat (Boyle 254) . Plus her life accomplishments are seen on the current level rather always wanting to accomplish later than her counterpart Junior.

Environment does not determine happiness it is simply one's ability to have a positive mindset and appreciate what life offers like Daria in the story.

Works Cited

Boyle, T. C. *Tooth and Claw*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011.

Gleason, Paul William. *Understanding T. C. Boyle*. South Carolina: Univ of South Carolina Press, 2009.