

Our town



A Summary of: ' Our Town'. The play ' Our Town' has been written by Thornton Wilder and revolves around the daily life stories of people living in a small town called ' Grover's corners', new Hampshire. The play is a beautiful depiction of slow changes in life that come unknowingly and become a part of daily routine naturally. The play shows how change occurs in this small town where the total population is not more than three thousand. It focuses on two main families and two youths, a man and a woman, who fall in love and get married. The events that occur sequentially are representative of differences between the generations as well as of gradual acceptance of small changes in life activities by both generations. In the play, a man is actually showing the viewer around. Like a guide, he takes the viewers to different parts of the town and introduces them to different characters.

As the story proceeds, the viewer is introduced to side characters, the milk man, the newspaper boy, the church people and the local doctor. These may be side characters but they play an important role in presenting the habits and life style of people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The hero of the play, George is seventeen years old when he decides to become a farmer. The heroine, Emily is deeply in love with George and doesn't want to part from him for three years even if it is for his farming education. They decide to get married.

The marriage scene itself is very significant. In form of vocal self addresses, it portrays the feelings of the bride and groom, their parents and even the wedding priest regarding marriage. Sometime later, when the couple becomes pregnant and Emily is in anesthesia during the delivery, she has a dream, or more likely a vision, in which she sees her own funeral. The dream

is important since it conveys an emotional message, therefore it is described below: Emily sees herself after death, standing among many dead relatives of her and George. She wants to go back to life and doesn't want to die. She gets a last chance to view her past. She chooses a day of her life that was her sixteenth birthday. While viewing the happenings of that day, she realizes so many things that she had been ignoring in life. For instance she realizes that she never really noticed how young and beautiful her mother was, or how concerned her parents were for the children etc. she delivers the dialogue containing this lesson aloud and then wakes up from the dream. The play ends with the guide taking the viewer to the grave yard and reflecting a bit on death in ' Grover's Corners'. The finish is smooth, as if a story has ended and the reporter is done with all the reporting. The end is complete and leaves the viewer well informed with a feeling that all about the town that was to be told has been told.

My favorite component of the play is the depiction of change that is portrayed after a skip of three years. The milkman who used to deliver milk on foot in metal containers, after a gap of three years comes on a vehicle and delivers the milk and cream separately in clean bottles, and collects the old bottles. I found this to be a very comprehensive yet time saving way to represent the modernization that was slowly coming in the town.

I did not like one part in the story which was the dream. The dream was altogether a good idea, but it could have been used more creatively to represent other shortcomings in people's lives as well. It focused only on human ignorance of appreciating the relations; other issues generation gap and emotional aspect of a generation trying to balance between the old ways and new technology could also have been incorporated into the dream act.

On the whole, the play is an amazing depiction of the changing life in the early twentieth century. The characters are introduced in such a way that by the end of the play, the viewers feel as if they are a part of the town themselves. It is a heartwarming experience to watch the play which addresses simple yet important issues.