

# Brother dear

[Family](#), [Father](#)



Brian Van-Huynh “ Brother Dear” by Bernice Friesen In the short story Brother Dear, Bernice Friesen introduces the antagonistic relationship a parent and child share when they do not see eye to eye in terms of success. Greg and his father struggle through difficulty as Greg is caught in the midst of what his father wants him to do as appose to what he wants for himself. The conflict that exists between Greg and his Father proves that parents should allow their children to discover and follow theirdreams, rather than forcing them upon their own wishes.

In addition, the author suggests that success can come in various forms, but each form is unique to each person. Therefore when parents deny their kids’ ambition to achieve something, they only create dissatisfaction and despair. This story takes place when Greg comes home from university, where his Dad had paid for his tuition, and had planned for Greg to study law. Sharlene, who is in grade 11, parallels the conflict between the ideals of success based on her brother and father. She is caught between two contrasting approaches on life where agreeing with her father or supporting her brother Greg are her only options.

Greg is introduced to be a rebellious character that does not take orders from anyone. This does not meet his fathers standards for he is strict and controlling when it comes to planning his children’s future. When Greg’s father discovers that he has chosen a different path in life, he is enraged. Not only does this create a predicament between two individuals but also draws in the wholefamilyas it becomes the topic of discussion. In reference to the above, the pressure that Greg’s father puts on him makes him feel

meaningless because he has chosen to do what he wants to do rather than following in his father's footsteps.

Greg's father claims he is lazy, has "no drive, and no ambition to do well in school" (Friesen 4), this only forces Greg away from caring about school and creates resentment towards his father who constantly puts him down. What the family does not notice is that Greg does not want to walk a narrow road, but to be free and do what he is passionate for. When Greg lashes back saying that his family is too materialistic and wastes money on unnecessary items, his passion is revealed and portrayed through his actions and words.

In addition to what creates a sense of individuality seen in Greg is the conversation at the dinner table. When brought up by his Father, Greg mentions that he no longer eats meat because he's a vegetarian. He lets his family know he did not go to exams because he skipped it to go to a protest in Edmonton. Greg also tells his family of how he isn't going back to school, and that he's going to spend his summer planting trees. These three prime examples give the reader a strong sense that Greg has a lot of motivation and ambition.

By skipping his exam, it is proven that planting trees or protesting is not just a hobby of Greg's but more of a lifestyle. Towards the end, Greg asks a simple question before he leaves: "Is that all my family can ever do? Point out what's wrong with me?" (Friesen 6) it is this question that makes Sharlene wondrous. This question further supports the theme of conflict between two individuals who don't see eye to eye, because many parents think they are always right. Greg is simply doing what he loves, and this is not up to par with his father and considered irresponsible. Be something. Be

something. That's all I ever get from Dad" (Frieson 5), this sentence describes how his father is always demanding Greg to do something he sees as successful, such as going to university and earning a degree. Nevertheless, Greg believes that he is old enough to make his own decisions and benefit from them. When Sharlene asks, " So you never want to be anything? "(Friesen 6) as if Greg is never going to be successful, Greg is enraged because his perspective on life is the opposite of what his dad's is.

It is evident that although he is not going to follow his father's path of success, he will still be successful, but in his own eyes. Lastly, Frieson proves it can be difficult for parents to allow their children to follow their own dreams, risking the relationship between parent and child. Greg shares his knowledge of life with his sister Sharlene and together they come to an understanding that you live life to bring joy upon yourself, not to please the others around you. In the end, Greg has defined his own success, which links his ambition and passion to dictate his own life.