

# Examples of loyalty in the kite runner [essay]

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



The reading of Khaled Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* leaves very little doubt as to the fact that the theme of loyalty plays a rather important role in defining the novel's semiotic significance. After all - it is after having proven his loyalty to Hassan by the means of bringing his son Sohrab to the U. S. that the novel's protagonist Amir was able to attain inner peace - hence, providing a semantic wholesomeness to the plot. In our paper, we will aim to explore the nature of loyalty in *The Kite Runner*.

For the first time, the theme of loyalty comes to its prominence in the novel's scene when, while trying to defend Amir, Hassan aims his slingshot at Assef: " I turned and came face to face with Hassan's slingshot... Hassan held the slingshot pointed directly at Assef's face" (21). Even though, while remaining friends with Amir, Hassan never ceased being treated with a subtle disdain, due to his ethnic background and his low social status, Hassan's helping hand was always there for Amir. Thus, Hassan's loyalty to Amir is evident.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about Amir because the main character's lessened sense of loyalty did not derive out of his existential idealism, as it was the case with Hassan, but was instead a byproduct of his rationally functioning psyche.

The plausibility of this suggestion becomes evident in the scene when, after having considered the possible consequences of his involvement, Amir refrains from stepping forward, in order to prevent Hassan from being raped by Assef - hence, proving himself an ultimate coward in its own eyes: " I had one last chance to make a decision.

One final opportunity to decide who I was going to be. I could step into that alley, stand up for Hassan... Or I could run. In the end, I ran. I ran because I was a coward" (39). As the theme essay on *The Kite Runner* implies, at that time, Amir was not aware of the fact that his refusal to stand up for Hassan accounted for his lessened ability to act like a man while facing life's challenges, as in the case when he resents Hassan.

Nevertheless, as the novel's plot unraveled, it was becoming increasingly apparent for Amir that, for him to be able to relieve his deep-seated sense of guilt, due to the memory of what had happened, he would have to prove its loyalty to Hassan somehow. The problem was that, as it has been revealed to Amir by Rahim Khan, Hassan ended up being killed by a ravaging mob of Taliban guerillas. Yet, Hassan's son Sohrab was able to survive an ordeal.

And, after having been presented with Hassan's post-mortem letter, where his former friend was asking him to take care of Sohrab, Amir realized that his willingness to look into Hassan's request would account for his ability to repay for Hassan's loyalty with loyalty. This was precisely the reason why, despite being perfectly aware of the full spectrum of dangers associated with taking a trip to Afghanistan, Amir nevertheless had decided in favor of this undertaking.

It was Amir's ever-present sense of guilt for his betrayal, which had prompted him to go to Afghanistan: " I have a wife in America, a home, a career, and a family. But how could I pack up and go back home when my actions may have cost Hassan a chance at those very same things?" (114).

After having arrived to Afghanistan, however, Amir realized that his price for proving loyalty to Hassan was even higher – it was not only that he had to face dangers of staying in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, but that he also had to face the ultimate showdown with Assef, who by that time became one of Taliban’s war-lords. As such, his actions may be considered as one of the examples of loyalty in *The Kite Runner*.

And, it was not because he was able to subdue Assef physically, but because, for once in his life, Amir did not have any second thoughts, while defying his old arch-enemy, that he ended up achieving a moral victory over Assef: “ I don’t know at what point I started laughing...

And the harder I laughed, the harder he kicked me... What was so funny was that, for the first time since the winter of 1975, I felt at peace” (147). The reason why, while fighting Assef, Amir experienced a sensation of inner peace, is that by doing it, he was able to prove its loyalty to Hassan.

As the novel’s consequential and highly mystical scene implies, the deceased Hassan did, in fact, appreciate Amir’s long-awaited token of loyalty. Just as Hassan used to do, his son Sohrab raised a slingshot and shot Assef right into his eye: “ The slingshot made a thwiiiiit sound when Sohrab released the cup.

Then Assef was screaming. He put his hand where his left eye had been just a moment ago. Blood oozed between his fingers” (148). The context of this particular scene suggests that the consequence of Amir proving himself courageous enough to act loyally towards Hassan’s son, was the

reestablishment of a friendship between Amir and Hassan, even though the latter was no longer living.

Thus, just as we had pointed out earlier, there are good reasons to believe that it is specifically the theme of loyalty in *The Kite Runner*, which binds the plot's spatial developments into the semantically unified compound.

Hosseini's message about the importance of loyalty, forgiveness, and love is evident in the story. Apparently, it is the author's masterful exploration of this particular theme throughout the novel's entirety, which provides readers with insight into the fact that the extent an individual's ability to act loyally towards his friends is being reflective of the extent of such person's existential manliness.

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. New York: Riverhead, 2003.