

# Franz Kafka's life – metamorphosis

Literature



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This tale depicts the struggles of Franz Kafka's life. Kafka is essentially Gregor because Kafka's father considered him a failure for wanting to become a writer rather than a businessman. The temperament of Kafka's father is very similar to that of Gregor's father. Gregor is presented as an exaggeration of Kafka's life. Kafka seems to have felt like a creature trapped in a room and could not leave in order to escape further abuse.

The *Metamorphosis* is no more than a hyperbole for the emotional and physical abuse that Kafka's family put him through.

Early on in Burnoose's translation, the sorrows and hardships that Gregor feels are reflected upon: " Good Lord," he thought, " what an exhausting profession I've chosen. Day in and day out on the road. Work like this is far more unsettling than business conducted at home, and then I have the agony of traveling itself to contend with: worrying about train connections, the irregular, and unpalatable meals, and human intercourse that is constantly changing, never developing the least constancy or warmth.

Devil take it all! " (Burnoose) Gregor is clearly unhappy with his profession as Kafka was unhappy in the field of business and wanted to become the writer that he longed to be. Gregor's transformation or metamorphosis can be perceived as a hypothetical situation. Gregor morphing into an insect could be what Kafka sees happening when telling his family that he wants to be a writer. Gregor feels that he has failed his family and they are ashamed of him, even at points not even sure that the insect is still Gregor.

This represents his family's theoretical disobedient of him if he were to quit the path of business for a writing career. This scene is reinforced in Peter Supper's graphic representation of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*. This idea is graphically represented from pages 9-17 in Supper's adaptation. In Burnoose's translation, this idea took up about half a page, which is vastly different from the graphic novel. Supper clearly spent a lot of time on this scene and decided to make the salesman in the comic to look much like Franz Kafka.

The graphics show Gregory constantly being belittled and unhappy. Gregory is shown to be a ticking time bomb. On page 17 in Supper's version, Gorge's father is seen for the first time in a very intimidating and demanding tone while he bangs on Gorge's door, yelling "GREGORY, Greatcoat's going on?" (Supper 17) It is interesting that Supper makes the human version of Gregory to look like Kafka and for the father to be a very frightening character.

Later on in part two, short after Gregory startles his mother causing her to faint, a violent interaction occurs between Gregory and his father: "All at once something flew to the rug beside him, casually flung, and rolled horror, Gregory stopped in his tracks; there was no point continuing to run now that his father had decided to bombard him.... The petite red apples rolled around the floor as id electrified, knocking into each other. One lightly lobbed apple grazed Gorge's back and slid off again harmlessly. But it was immediately followed by another that embedded itself in his back. (Burnooses 84) This is relatable to the life of Franz Kafka. Kafka's father was so obsessed with the idea of Franz become a businessman like he was that he beat him when he found out that he wanted to be a writer instead. The "insect" that Gregory could be seen as the failure of a businessman that Kafka's father saw in him.

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Also it is interesting that Kafka's weapon of choice was an apple. The apple, biblically, is a weapon of evil as seen in the story of Adam and Eve. This scene happens relatively fast in Super's graphic novel from pages 47-50.

Super made the father look very angry, towering, and mean, while making Gregory look defenseless and confused about what is being done to him. This could be depicted as Kafka being beaten for not being what he was expected to be by his father. Kafka does not understand why he is beaten abused as Gregory seems to feel judging by the images in the graphic novel along with the many "?"s in thought bubbles. Super seems to have glossed over many scenes included in Burnoose's translation of *The Metamorphosis*. Super seems to focus more on Gorge's interactions with his family and briefly time within the head of Gregory.

It is understood that Super uses a different translation than that of Burnoose's. Super tends to make scenes more intense and dark as compared to Burnoose's and that could very well be a result of the use of a different translation. English translations of Kafka's novel cannot be exactly translated over to English. These translations have a lot of open room to input personal perceptions of scenes by the authors. Super clearly uses artistic styles in his graphic representation. Super explicitly makes retain scenes all over the place if it is meant to be that way.

In. Some cases he gives many flashes such as the scene where Gregory dies (Super 69), but on the next two pages Super spreads the scene throughout two pages. He makes the scene dark, but has light and clarity shining through, which is something Gregory experiences less as the story unfolds

and he deteriorates (Super If Super wants the reader to understand that the scene is significant, he made it large and with less going on, using pages 70-71 and pages 78-79 as examples. Gregory Same is comparable to Franz Kafka in so many ways.

This is seen throughout both translations of *The Metamorphosis* as discussed. Gregory is a failure to his family as Kafka was a failure in the eyes of his father. Gorge's metamorphosis is Kafka becoming a writer and his family cannot accept him for who he really is, which ultimately leads to his deterioration and death. Burnooses chose to make this novel more focused on the thoughts of Gregory and the solitude of his room while Super includes mostly family/ human interactions in a very dark and intense manner. *The Metamorphosis* is an allegory that depicts the twisted life of Franz Kafka.