

The metamorphosis



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Here Teacher Here Goes Here Goes Here The Satisfaction of Gregor Samsa:

The Transformation of Need in The Metamorphosis

Over the course of *The Metamorphosis*, the protagonist Gregor grows increasingly more insect-like. While at first the shift is only physical, it soon begins to overtake him emotionally and mentally. At first, he is represented as a human-sized insect, but over the course of the novella, he becomes small and loses all that is left of his humanity. In the loss of his humanity, his desires shift over the course of the text.

Early in the novel, Gregor expresses jealousy over traveling salesmen who have the opportunity to relax and eat breakfast and bemoans his inability to quit, as he must provide for his family. He is motivated by his need to fit into the role of being a family man.

However, once Gregor is inexplicably transformed into an *Ungeziefer*— which is roughly equivalent to “ vermin”— he is no longer capable of taking care of his family in a traditional capacity. Instead, he is relegated to being a blind, wilting creature. All of his energy goes towards looking out the window, even as his vision and perception deteriorate.

He devolves from desiring to care for his family and retain his job to desiring nothing more than to delude himself into believing that his sister is playing the violin for him. He scurries out into their midst, no longer conscious as his family's need for him to remain hidden. He confronts his mother with his shriveled form and terrifies their lodgers with his uncleanliness.

Ultimately, Gregor's nature as a man is completely destroyed. As his family — however horrid they might be— points out, “ If [this creature] were Gregor he would have seen long ago that its not possible for human beings to live with an animal like that and he would have gone of his own free will.” Gregor

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has lost his ability to place his family above himself, but he still retains his ability to feel affection as evidenced by the “ emotion and love” he holds for his family. The obligation that he held as a traveling salesman, however, has long since faded away, taking with it the satisfactions and desires that mark him as human.

Work Cited

Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis. Globusz Publishing, Globusz Publishing.

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