

The rich brothers



Each person's definition of rich is different. In *The Rich Brother*, Pete valued material things and felt that he had prospered while Donald hadn't because the only thing Donald valued was his soul and Pete couldn't understand that. I think that Pete's treatment of Donald stemmed from their childhood and the feelings of jealousy towards Donald that Pete had. Both, Pete and Donald seem to resemble the author Tobias Wolff and his brother Geoffrey in ways. Pete and Donald were completely different in every way but, I believe Donald was the richer of the two and not Pete.

Pete and Donald were different in their look, their values and in the way they lived their lives. Pete was stout and hearty while Donald was bony and grave. Pete valued materialistic things while Donald valued his soul. Pete owned his own business and had a wife and a family. Donald didn't own anything and he worked as a house painter when he could and he was alone in the world except for Pete who thought of him more as a nuisance than a brother. Pete took from the world and Donald gave to the world. I think that Pete's feelings toward Donald stemmed from their childhood.

I believe that while Donald was sickly as a child that Pete was jealous of all the attention that their mother gave Donald. When Donald had surgery, Pete kept trying to kill him by hitting him where his stitches were. And when they talked on the drive and Donald confronted Pete with it Pete tried to deny it at first and when Donald told him that he was awake when he was hitting him and just pretending to be asleep Pete couldn't figure out why Donald hadn't fought him back or at least screamed out. On that car ride Donald forgave Pete and Pete didn't respond but he felt guilty.

Pete didn't understand why Donald was so concerned about his soul. He felt that since his parents didn't believe in anything that there was nothing to believe in. Donald joined different religious groups trying to find the love and acceptance he craved from his brother. He wanted his brother to love and accept him for who he was. He found love and acceptance with the different groups he joined, at least for a while. Donald was happy when he was helping others but Pete was happy with wealth. Donald was a giver and Pete was a taker.

When Donald asked Pete if he ever dreamed of him Pete was hesitant to answer him. Donald had admitted to Pete that he dreamed about him but he didn't tell him that the dream was about Pete being blind and Donald taking care of him. I think the dreams were a warning that Pete would need Donald in his future. Pete thought of Donald as a goof up and a goof off. He seemed to be confused about his feelings for Donald. It seemed that Pete did a lot more giving than Donald did asking, maybe trying to clear his conscience for the way he had treated his brother.

He would help Donald when he needed it and without Donald asking for help but yet he resented having to help him. He seemed to care about Donald because he went to pick him up because he didn't want him hitch-hiking. Yet, he let Donald get out of the car in the middle of nowhere in the pitch black of night and with them having heard noises coming from the woods. When Pete got out of the car with Donald and bent down to pick at the dirt it was like he was saying goodbye forever without using the words. Then all Pete could think about was what he was going to tell his wife about where his brother was.

I think that Pete and Donald bare some resemblance to the author Tobias Wolff and his brother Geoffrey because Tobias and Geoffrey's parents divorced and Tobias went to live with his mother who was a waitress and a secretary, while Geoffrey went to live with their father who was an aerospace engineer. Tobias was abused by his stepfather and live a totally different life than his brother. In the end they both became successful writers. When you think about the two brothers and their completely different lives you think that Pete was the rich one but, was he really? Donald was a forgiving, caring soul and to me that make him the rich brother.