

Anthem by ayn rand. character analysis (equality)

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Growing up, Ayn Rand, the author of the short novelette Anthem, experienced some of the tragic things that the main protagonist had gone through in this story first hand. At the time when Ayn Rand resided in Russia, it was a communist country being controlled by the government. Ayn and her family had fled to the United States in hopes that they could pursue a better life over there. When Ayn wrote Anthem in 1938, it was to give an insight about how her life living in a totalitarian country was before she had come to America. One main reason why she chose to come to America specifically, was because she felt like the country represented her individualist philosophy and morals. She expresses her feelings and life experiences through the main character Equality, both of who have faced countless hardships living in a collectivist society where most people were not allowed to make their own decisions as an individual.

The reason why in chapter eight Equality laughs when he remembers that he is damned, is because he is free after he has finally escaped the confinements of his old city. He can finally live life as his own person and do what is best for himself and not doing what is best for his brothers. Equality was used living a life where he is told that almost everything he does is considered a transgression. Now that he is on his own, Equality now has the power to decide for himself what he personally thinks is right or wrong and not be told what to think. To him it is ironic that he has been labeled as being “damned” for so long only for doing what makes himself happy. Now he is finally starting to realize that he hasn’t done anything wrong. His whole life has been controlled and all of his choices have already been predetermined without him having any say in it.

“ We did not wish to move. We thought suddenly that we could lie thus as long as we wished, and we laughed aloud at the thought. We could also rise, or run, or leap, or fall down again. We were thinking that these were thoughts without sense, but before we knew it our body had risen in one leap” When Equality wakes up on his own for the first time ever, he realizes that he is truly alone. Nobody is able to choose his decisions, it is all up to him and he is ecstatic about it. He felt liberated after being set free of his old life. He no longer has to do everything at a set schedule or be told what to do, he can now live life freely on his own terms. When he was living in his old city, he was deprived of basic privileges that to people nowadays don't even think about. When equality sees his reflection in the water for the first time in his life, he is surprised at how he looks. He is extremely relieved to know that he does not look like a cookie cutter replica of his brothers. It does not matter to him anymore if they consider him “ damned”, because in his mind he knows that he has not done anything wrong. He is no longer brainwashed and is excited that he now has the ability to think on his own. He wishes that his brothers back in the city will come to terms with reality and grasp the knowledge that let him escape.

Equality can finally choose what he wants to do in his life. He does not have to live alongside his brothers if he does not wish to. He is realizing that he can choose who he wants in his life and is not obligated to use “ we” unless if he wants to. Slowly, he is becoming a normal person despite what the people back in the city believe him to be. His whole life in the city he was never truly happy or joyful, and now that he can be an individual, he has

never felt more alive. He is having the most fun that he has ever had in his life living on his own and can fulfill any dream he wants.