

# Stolpestad



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Stopped is the main character in the short story. He is a police officer, born and raised in the town where he lives. His world revolves around the small town containing the coffee shops, the liquor stores, Laundromats, police, fire, gas stations (p. 1 l. 4-5) as the narrator tells us, this is his life. Note that assuming the narrator is Stopped himself, he actually defines himself by this place - those few things listed before is everything he sees himself in - he has no sense of own identity.

However Stopped is filled with a longing, he describes the streets as sad, and as he drives by them he is hoping to glimpse someone or something - yourself as a boy perhaps (p. 1 l. 13) He is desperate for a change and wonders where his youth went. His whole life is like the sun never burning through the clouds, clouds never breaking into rain (p. 1 l. 2-3) nothing ever happens no good nor bad. Stopped never expresses through the story how discontent and desperate he feels, he probably never even said a word to his wife about it. However as it is popularly said; his actions speak louder than his words.

Besides the sphere of adjectives in the text put the by the author, Stopped shows his discontent and despair when he instead of returning home to his wife and children after a long, hard days work, finds comfort at the bottom of a pint and yet another pint at a local pub. Lack, the author, lets the reader know, that this is part of a regular cycle in Stopped's life. This is by showing us that the wife, Sheila, knows exactly where to call him, when she tells him that the boy has come to his house later that evening. Stopped doesn't apparently even change the pub he visits.

In conclusion he is a lonesome policeman, who has become an apathetic husband and bitter that his life has suddenly disappeared before he made up the courage to do something about it. When the dog comes into the story it is a change from Extrapolates normal everyday life. Along with it comes a challenge; Stopped himself is not brave enough to end the dogs life although he knows it is suffering. In the story it is a symbol of the trivial live in the suburbs. Stopped, the character, may not be afraid of killing a dog, but when the dog becomes a symbol of killing his tedious existence, he hesitates although it is precisely what he desires.

But instead of making a mess out of things he could at least have called a vet. The mother and the child rejects the idea with a single no, but wasn't he at his rights to Stopped By Chronometric ins Again Stopped give in although reluctant as en still hopes to be saved by the boy but the boy and his mother is waiting so eventually he puts down the dog. However instead of giving the dog a shot just above the dogs ears, he chooses an untraditional way, shooting the dogs neck in order to cover the wound.

But as the story moves on to later in the evening, when the dad has come to scold Stopped, we learn that this is a fatal indiscretion: because of Extrapolates presumably nice gesture, the dog was alive until the dad came home and thus suffering for hours on. It in the end it shows that Stopped is completely incapable of escaping his own life. The dog was his chance to do something different, break the patterns and show some courage but this mission he failed. Stopped has a scarily lethargic approach to life. It becomes even clearer through the second-person narrative.

He refers to himself as 'you' a very uncommon thing in literary fiction that associates more with guidebooks and other non-fiction genres. It is also a way of almost dragging the reader into Extrapolates life, making us identify with or imagine how it is like. Also by making this choice one never gets to know the reasoning behind Extrapolates actions. It makes him cold and unsympathetic and makes him seem like a non-reflecting, passive man. Like a tourist he travels through his life without making any active choices, but just following the unyielding routines. Until now it has been assumed that the narrator of Stopped is himself.

However this is obvious in the story, with the fluent restrictions of fiction we have to acknowledge that the narrator might as well be a 'character', taking no part in the story, but who knows everything that happens in Extrapolates life. If it is Stopped, who writes the story, it must be him addressing himself somewhat objectively. If it is a different character it would be this character's interpretation of Extrapolates life due to it being another character making the narrative meta by acting as story teller - it is however important to remember that we the author cannot be the narrator as well although the narrator can be implicit.

No matter the narrator the story still serves as a wake-up call for any urbanite in stagnation due to its second-person narrative. It is directed to the reader - Lack makes a somewhat non-stupid assumption that anyone can relate to the state of inaction. Stopped is everything that we fear becoming. Instead of sitting around waiting for our life of reruns to change we should be able to do, what Stopped couldn't: just take a chance, do something unpleasant and shoot the damn dog.