

Hemingway

Business



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Everyone can have a different perspective on life and how they want to live it. However, with age comes more knowledge and wisdom on the idea if there is even a true meaning of life. The short story, Clean Well-Lighted Place does a great example of portraying that.

Ernest Hemingway shows the idea of life as nothingness through the characters dialogue, internal thoughts, and literary devices. To begin, Hemingway sets the tone of the story with dialogue of the two main characters, the waiters who has no characterization or description. " Last week he tried to kill himself" " Why?" " He was in despair." " What about?" " Nothing." " How do you know it was about nothing?" " He has plenty of money" To me, this dialogue is already showing that the characters think there is no deeper meaning to life and that the unidentified elderly man should be content with life only because of the money he has in possession.

This proves that the characters don't value the true feelings and enrichment life can offer you. Adding to, Hemingway next demonstrates through the older waiter's thoughts his view on life meaning nothing. While closing up the restaurant he begins to ponder." It was not fear or dread, it was a nothing that he knew too well. It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all nothing and a man was nothing too.

" Then the paragraph continues by the character reciting a prayer but adding in nada in each sentence, which means nothing in spanish. These thoughts clearly support that the older waiter, who has lived through many more experiences and understood many more things has come to a conclusion that life is just for living and there really is no true meaning. Continuing. The

author further shows nothingness in the story when he has the characters discuss the actions of the drunken old man. The younger waiter seems to show more intolerance towards the man in the cafe, unlike his colleague, the older waiter who has more patience on things. " I want to go to bed" " What is an hour?" " More to me than to him" " An hour is the same" " You talk like an old man yourself.

He can buy a bottle and drink at home" " Its not the same." In that dialogue, the banter of the two is portraying that the older waiter has more compassion towards the old man in the cafe because he knows that even if it's a little issue or big issue it doesn't matter. He believes life is nada and you should just live it how you please while on the other hand the younger waiter overreacts about even the small things. Also, I think Hemingway purposely didn't use characterization and description in the short story to help set the mood of there being nothing there and very little detail in life. In fact, the only time Hemingway brings up the looks of the cafe or the characters is when the younger waiter is protesting against the sloppy actions of the old man and he defends the condition of the cafe.

" You do not understand. This is a clean and pleasant cafe. It is well lighted. The light is very good and also, now, there are shadows of the leaves." In that excerpt I think the author is trying to state two things. One, the younger waiter is so bothered by a little thing that he takes great pride in the cleanliness of the cafe and two how the other older waiter is unbothered being that the cafe is dull and that one person does not affect it.

In conclusion, Ernest Hemingway explores the idea of with age comes more knowledge on the true meaning of life through the two waiters actions and thoughts about the old man and the cafe.