

True knowledge

Business



“ With age comes wisdom, but sometimes age comes alone” an age-old (no pun intended) saying by Oscar Wilde. The quote, “ With age comes wisdom”, implies that the older someone gets, they become more wise, or knowledgeable. Now, this may yet be true, considering we learn something new every day, but understanding what we learn, and having insight into what we are discovering as we live, that is true knowledge and wisdom. For example, utilizing Anton Chekhov’s “ The Bet”, we are able to see how true knowledge is gained through human nature and insights. Using character, plot, symbolism, and direct statements, we can see how True Knowledge is acquired from insights and understanding of the learnings a person has had through studies, and other people; no matter the circumstances.

To begin, we can look at the characters of the story to see how True Knowledge is gained through human nature and insights. The two main characters involved are a young lawyer, choosing a life of seclusion and knowledge over his early years as an adult, who is changed in the end, more or less unlocking astounding knowledge and insight through his years in confinement. The prisoner began zealously studying languages, philosophy, and history. He threw himself eagerly into these studies-” (Chekhov 213) Here we see how the young man is so “ eager” to learn the studies and languages, he looks for insight into history and philosophy. Later in the story, the man mentions how his studies have “ given him wisdom,” which I will cover with evidence of Direct Statements.

“ To prove to you in action how I despise all that you live by, I renounce the two million of which I once dreamed as of paradise and which now I despise. To deprive myself of the right to the money, I shall go out from here five

minutes before the time fixed and so break the compact...” (Chekhov 216) here we see the lawyer saying that he completely despises all that the banker lives by, and also the millions he once (used to, until his studies) saw as paradise. The other character is an aged banker, who is blinded by his wealth and easygoing years “ The banker, spoiled and frivolous, with millions beyond his reckoning” [Chekhov 212], who changed and humbled in the end of the story by the generosity of the lawyer, and the enlightenment he sees in the man. “ When the banker had read this, he laid the page on the table, kissed the strange man on the head, and went out of the lodge, weeping.” (Chekhov 216) We can take from the way he reacts to the other man’s generosity by weeping and kissing him on the head, that he has been humbled and enlightened by what he has seen the man go through and said toward him. Using character, we were able to see how the characters changed over the course of the text, and became enlightened with their insights, studies, and interactions with others, a precursor leading to True Knowledge.

Another way we are able to see how True Knowledge comes from insights and understanding of learning or beings, is through symbolism. Recurring symbols throughout “ The Bet” are good ways to interpret our theme of True Knowledge. One of the noticeable symbols, may not be recurring- as it is only mentioned twice- but does seem very significant, and that is the Fireproof Safe. The fireproof safe appears near the end of the story, when the Banker takes from it the key to the lawyers prison, but not to let him out, only to save himself from his bankruptcy by ending the life of the other man. ““ No, it is too much! The one means of being saved from bankruptcy and

disgrace is the death of that man!” (Chekhov 214), we enter the thoughts of the banker, stating that the only way to free himself from his bankruptcy and disgrace is to kill the other.

So, taking the key from the fireproof case symbolizes his idea and desire to kill the other man, to save himself from his own bet. The second time the safe is mentioned, is in the last few lines of text, after the Banker has read and discovered the lawyer’s story and repentance, and in which at the end of a note left by the man, the millions bet are renounced. “-I renounce the two million of which i once dreamed as of paradise and which now I despise.” (Chekhov 216) The banker then, instead of killing the man guilty of only knowledge, kisses him on the head and proceeds to lock up the note that proves the lawyer renounces the millions that are rightfully his. “ To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced and, when he got home, locked it up in the Fireproof Safe” (Chekhov 216) This Symbolizes the Banker accepting the lawyer’s mercy and generosity, by not killing him, and placing the note in the Safe which he took out the key to the room of the man he would have eventually killed.

Now, say the young man hadn’t have learned the studies, philosophies and been enlightened by his imprisonment? He would have been expecting the millions which he had bet in return for his imprisonment ([Chekhov 212] “ I’ll take the bet, but I would stay not five, but fifteen years.”) And the Banker most definitely would have taken his life. Through the young man’s enlightenment and desire to learn and study, his knowledge necessarily saved him; from his studies and understandings he gained knowledge,
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ironically, without knowing it would save his life. A third way to see how True Knowledge comes from understanding of learning and insights, is through the plot of the story. “The Bet” is a story of a young attorney living in seclusion for fifteen years under a bet, and in his fifteen years of captivity he studies multiple and vast genre of literature and philosophy, religion, histories, etc.

, becoming enlightened and beyond knowledgeable of human nature and life itself. “In the second half of the sixth year the prisoner began zealously studying languages, philosophy, and history” (Chekhov 213) “Then, after the tenth year, the prisoner sat immovably at the table and read nothing but the Gospels.” (Chekhov 214) Through these studies, the young lawyer has great insight into the human natures, life, religions, philosophies, etc., giving him astounding knowledge and wisdom to his life. We can draw from the Plot of the story, that the young man uses his confinement and resources given to him to study, and become enlightened with True Knowledge, even through his captivity, stating that no matter someone’s state or position in life, whether be poverty, captivity, or wealth.

Lastly, we are able to see through direct statements how True Knowledge has been gained by studies and insights. The lawyer directly states in Chekhov’s “The Bet” that he has gained wisdom or knowledge from the books given to him, “Your books have given me wisdom, all that unresting thought of man has created in the ages is compressed into a small compass in my brain. I know I am wiser than all of you.” (Chekhov 215) The man says here that by studying books, he has gained wisdom, adding to the point that by study and insight, you are able to gain True Knowledge. Even while being <https://assignbuster.com/true-knowledge/>

held captive in a small room for fifteen years of his life, by studies, and insights into texts, the young lawyer gained Knowledge and Wisdom from his learnings.

In Anton Chekhov's *The Bet*, it is shown through human nature and insights that true knowledge is gained through years of insights, studies and learnings, no matter the circumstances, whether it be extreme wealth, or captivity. We have seen through Character, Symbolism, Plot, and Direct Statements that True Knowledge, is only acquired through a burning desire for knowledge and wisdom, while learning from studies and others. So, yes, "with age comes wisdom", for we age with every second that passes in our life here on Earth. But what we do with those seconds depends whether or not we will learn anything at all "but sometimes age comes alone". Spend your time in life with an open mind, and never let your desire for knowledge burn away.

True Knowledge, is, and can be yours, but only if you want it. Work Cited List
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