

## **THE MOTIF OF METAMORPHOSIS: A CHANGE OF A PERSON INTO A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ONE**

The theme of a human transformation into something dark and mysterious can be presented in two short stories by Neil Gaiman. “Other People” (2006) [2] and “Troll Bridge”(1993) [4]. Both works have a lot in common, but the most common thing presented in these plots is a change in a human being.

### **Plot**

The first novel tells us about such a thing as hell, where sinners are believed to go after their death. A man turns out in a room with a devil. For his punishments, he used 211 implements, but that wasn't the worst part. Reliving his life, again and again, knowing all his mistakes without having a chance to redeem them, is the worst.

Troll Bridge is a tale about a seven-year-old boy who liked adventures in his village. One day, he found a new path that seemed magical to him. But when he reached a bridge, he saw a troll who wanted to eat the boy's life. The kid didn't want to die at such a young age, so he said that he would return later.

### **Mistakes and their results**

The man from the first story re-experienced his life for thousands of years. Every small and big lie, how he cheated on his wife with her sister, he relived everything. Then, his executioner showed him the results of his choices. It was the biggest lesson in his life.

When the boy in the second story turned fifteen, he met the Troll again and this time wanted him to take his first love instead of him, just like he offered his sister to a monster eight years ago. He avoided death again and lived his life. He was cheating on his wife, and one day he returned to the empty house and found a letter from her. Fifteen pages of truth, she knew everything. He went to the old bridge and let the Troll eat his life.

### **Realization**

After reliving old mistakes, the man opened his eyes and saw another man in expensive clothes entering the room just like he did many years before. He understood that now he has a new role and said: “The time is fluid here”. He became the torturer for the other human.

After avoiding death two times, and living not the best life one day, a man in the second story got a letter from his wife. The man realized what he had done with his life and went to the Troll. He met him with a smile and was happy to see him. The monster became the man, and the man became the Troll.

### **Torturers**

Both men changed their roles from sinners to torturers.

Man, who went to hell, after his ordeal became the devil to torture the next sinner. The good thing is that maybe after all those tortures, he understood his mistakes. The bad thing is that it's too late.

The small boy grew up and became an adult sinner. He was running from death, but eventually came to it by his own feet. He became the new troll under an old bridge. Not only that, but he wasn't eating other people's life, he stayed under the bridge and watched them.

### **The idea**

After reading both pieces, we can find different senses. The man who went to hell represents the understanding of mistakes without the opportunity to fix them. But wasn't he the devil from the beginning and the man at the end of this cycle? Or he became the devil, and torturing is his new punishment.

Maybe the man, who became a Troll, was a representative of a human. It's us during our life. As children, we used our family to grow up and become independent. With a help of others, we find a job and succeed in our plans. But then we become old we just sit and watch everybody, remembering childhood places so different from now. Maybe it's about running from death or realizing mistakes we have made. What if the Troll is a fear of a small boy, a person he didn't want to become.

But one idea is here, the same, for sure. The Hell is the other people. In 1943 Sartre wrote a play called "No Exit" [1]. The story of three people. After their death, they appeared in a room forever together as their punishment. This piece of literature proves that hell is Others. Staying in a room with two strangers who would complain about your life for infinity is a total hell.

Hell knows how many people you let down, hurt, cheated on... Others will also remind you about all sins, making your life negligible.

In both stories, hell was other people. It doesn't matter who they were. Positive or negative characters, they made hell for our sinners.

### **REFERENCES**

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