

ENGLISH: LIST 1

This text shows us that there is always more to people than we see on the surface. Discuss.

The characters in Sarah Watt's 'Look Both Ways' show us that there is always more to people than we see on the surface. Nick, after being diagnosed with cancer, is paralysed by his fear of death, which he keeps hidden from most of those around him. Meryl's indulgence in her own feelings and inner turmoil, through what we see as cartoon animations, are a means of escape from her ever-present anxieties, though these aren't her only fears. Andy's introverted and somewhat selfish personality presents him as a strong minded character, but underneath this, is a man with worries about his children, job and future. Through different means, the characters deal with and overcome these preoccupations that we don't see on the surface.

After discovering that he has contracted cancer, Nick is overcome by a sense of grief, which chokes him with a fear of death. After confiding in Phil, receiving a somewhat negative response 'What, skin cancer or something?' Nick retreats inside himself, not telling others of this life changing news. Nick sees death everywhere in his everyday life. 'I've been seeing death everywhere this weekend...I just look at people and I see them dying.' We, as viewers see these visions in the forms of photomontages, fitting, as Nick is a photojournalist. Seeing these flashbacks, fast-forwards, and photomontage take the viewers inside Nick's innermost thoughts. Although gripped by fear, Nick continues to go about his life as per usual, taking photos, playing cricket, visiting his mother, yet he still keeps his true feelings hidden from those close to him. Nick sees hearses, memorials, a child with cancer, all motifs which show the continuity of life and death in our world. Also, hearing his mother's words 'Everyone has to find a way to face their own death. And life-' Sends Nick forward in the right direction, believing that he should go out and bring out what he has hidden under the surface with those whom he loves.

Meryl is trapped inside herself by her fear and anxiety of death. She is dominated by her obsession with death, which we see in the form of cartoon animations. Again, these inner thoughts are shown to us, the viewers, in ways in which we believe Meryl would imagine such things. By externally painting her fears, Meryl is somewhat diminishing these worries by making them objective. Although these fear of death all around her are quite obvious to the viewers, Meryl's deepest fears are those of being unloved and alone. Although not seen on the surface, they are shown in the scene when Nick tells her of his skepticism towards starting a relationship. 'I met you on Friday, we slept together on Saturday, you took me to meet your mother on Sunday and now you say you can't start anything... That's the tightest little relationship I've ever had.' This explores what we don't see in Meryl's mind...her yearning for someone to care and love for her. With Nick in her life though, he helps her defeat the worries that dominate her life.

Andy is a man who feels cheated by life. Cheated by the system too many times. He is a divorced father with two kids and has only just realised he has made another woman, Anna, fall pregnant. His work is consumed by his fixation on male suicide. By tackling this issue, it seems that Andy in a way is fighting for the rights of men, as he feels like he, himself has had a rough ordeal in life. An angry man, with seemingly no sense of direction in life, Andy expresses a cynical view towards his work and life in general. 'Good. Good, well don't worry about me, I'm not gonna go jumping in front of a bloody train any time soon. I've still got important, meaningful relevant work to do. I've got bloody arts diary!' Caught up in his own, muddled world, Andy fails to see many things past his own thoughts. Evident when Nick finally opens up and tells him of his cancer battle, Andy quips 'What have you got cancer for?' And also quite blatantly when he asks Anna 'Did you do this on purpose?' relating to her pregnancy. Although he comes across as a dismissive, somewhat arrogant man, Andy does not express towards others his innermost worries. However, although those in Andy's workplace and those who play cricket with him may not see these fears of Andy's, they would sense that he is a trouble man underneath the surface due to his rather negative outlook on life. As shown by the photo of his children on his fridge, and the concern Andy shows when he learns that Maddy, his daughter has broken her arm, Andy is a man who cares for his children and longs for a

meaningful connection with them. Towards the end of the film, Andy also begins to show more of an interest in the welfare of his unborn baby and his responsibility towards Anna, steps on the road to relinquishing his worries and moving on in life.

These three characters share the common thread of suffering inner havoc. Fears and worries that they keep buried beneath the layer exposed to the outside world. Through externalising these anxieties, through contact with one another, the characters begin to overcome these debilitating, choking fears and begin to lead more fulfilling lives.