

Comparison of two films: My beautiful laundrette x About a boy

I would like to focus on one aspect of these two films and that is the social background, social classes. In my opinion it is very similar, even the same, in both the films. Now I will look at it more closely.

The first film, My beautiful laundrette, is about a young man, Omar, who comes from a lower social class. He lives with his father, Hussein, in a small flat near the train station, and takes care of him, as he is an alcoholic and needs his help. Omar's paternal uncle, Nasser, is a successful entrepreneur and an active member of the London Asian community. Hussein asks his brother to give Omar a job. Omar, after working as a car washer in one of Nasser's garages for a short time, starts to run a run-down laundrette and turns it into a successful business.

We can very clearly see the difference between Omar and his dad and Hussein. Hussein wears expensive clothes, has a big house, nice car, beautiful lover and does not care about money. He "lives his wealthy life", whereas Omar is grateful for any job as he wants to earn at least some money. In my opinion, he begins to like the life his uncle lives very soon and wants to have a lot of money too. He wants to be successful as he is.

In the second film, About a boy, there can be also very clearly seen the two social classes- on one side people who do not have much money and belong to a lower class, on the other those who have enough money, or even too much money, to live their lives in the way they

want to, not caring about how much money they spend and on what they spend them. To the first group belong a young boy, Marcus, together with his mum, Fiona, who is an alcoholic (another issue which these two films have in common). They both wear old-fashioned, grubby clothes. That causes that Marcus is being laughed at and bullying all the time. To the second group belongs a young man Will, who does not have any job and does not have to have any as he inherited a huge amount of money from the successful Christmas song that his father composed. He lives his leisurely and comfortable lifestyle, not caring about anything. He just watches TV, goes to the hairdresser, drinks beer etc. When Marcus meets Will, he thinks it would be good for his mum to have a boyfriend. So he visits Will every day after school, he watches TV with him. Many times Marcus has an opportunity to feel how it is like to have a nice thing- e.g. once he gets a new pair of shoes from Will. He likes having it. It is the same case as with Omar who feels how it is like to have money and likes the feeling.

In both the films there is a person who does not have much money, does not have a comfortable life style, and in some way gets to know the other way of living. I think it is very clear in the first film where Omar wants to have the money, to change his life, to run his own business, he does not want to be the poor guy any more. In the other film it is more about "tasting" the other way of living then actually changing it. As I said before, Marcus likes having new and nice things. But his mum does not like it. She is angry when Marcus gets the new shoes. She does not want him to wear them. At the end of the film she accepts all this, but nothing else changes. She still does not have much money so can not change her and her son's life.