

24th March 2023

## Friendship in Private Peaceful

Michael Morpurgo demonstrates friendship in *Private Peaceful* through Tommo and Molly's journey together. They both show kindness and respect toward one another. There are many examples of this, such as when Tommo was feeling 'all miserable and abandoned', we are told 'Molly would sometimes come running back and take my hand.' The kindness is demonstrated because when Tommo was feeling miserable, Molly noticed this and came back for him. This tells us how much she cares about Tommo and doesn't want him to feel left out. She is aware of how close in age she and Charlie are and how Tommo is a few years apart. Her running back shows that she understands Charlie and her can do things Tommo can't and we can tell how thoughtful she is that she cares for Tommo's feelings. All these caring acts Molly does develops the value they both hold in their relationship.

The obvious example of friendship in this novel is the relation shared by Charlie and Tommo. As we read more into the book, we see how their relationship goes beyond being brothers. They value each other dearly and truly care for one another. This is represented in how they talk about each other and speak to each other. As Charlie prepares to be executed, Tommo tells Charlie 'you're the best friend I've ever had, the best person I've ever known.' He uses the word 'best' to express how much Charlie means to him and again, we see how Tommo values Charlie when he says to himself 'What a friend I have in Charlie.' Here, in this quote, Tommo admires Charlie again as a great friend. Charlie also cares deeply for Tommo in the way of all the things Charlie does for Tommo. An example could be when Charlie steals Bertha. He knew Tommo loved her, so risked his job and took her. The biggest sacrifice Charlie makes for Tommo is when he tells Hanley 'I can't go with you because I'd have to leave Tommo behind, and I

can't do that.' Charlie refuses to leave Tommo resulting in his execution. The things the boys say and do for each other builds the idea of friendship in *Private Peaceful*.

The author represents friendship in his novel, *Private Peaceful* with the adorable friendship between Big Joe and Bertha. Through the early chapters of the novel, the loving bond between the two is established. Big Joe adores and admires Bertha and she is like a support animal for him. Bertha, when meeting Big Joe for the first time, attached to him instantly. The quote 'she followed him everywhere,' shows us Bertha loved Big Joe, another example is how 'she even slept on his bed at night - Big Joe insisted on that no matter how much Mother protested.' This quote demonstrates how the value they have is reciprocated. Their friendship is clearly stated when Tommo tells us 'Big Joe had found a new friend and he was in seventh heaven' All these quotes show the healthy and positive relation they have, when Bertha goes missing, Tommo tells us 'She hadn't wandered off at all until now; she'd always stuck close to Big Joe.' The semi-colon in this quote links the bold importance in both sentences. Michael Morpurgo uses this to identify how unusual it was that Bertha had been gone so long. It also helps develop the reader's understanding of how Bertha never left his side. So when Bertha dies, the reader feels sympathy for Big Joe because of their valued relationship. How much these two characters care for each other allows the author to build a representation of friendship.

Another idea of friendship in '*Private Peaceful*' is expressed through the family bond that continues to grow as you read into the novel; Mother and her sons, the Peacefuls. Mother is very protective of her sons, I believe she is so because of her husband's tragic death. Mother is particularly protective over Big Joe, refusing to give up on him, despite his brain damage

and the loss of Father. After Charlie and Tommo trick him into eating rabbit droppings, Mother forces them to eat one each and tells them 'Don't you treat Big Joe like that ever again.' We can also see her comforting him and singing 'Oranges and Lemons' to him when he's stressed. You really see how much she cares when Big Joe goes missing, she goes quiet and pale in the face. She also makes sacrifices and spends money on her sons' interests. When the Colonel yells and lectures Charlie over the thievery of Bertha, Mother sticks up for him and pays sixpence for the dog which leaves the Colonel 'dumbfounded'. Again, when Charlie has been secretly meeting up with Molly, she still defends him. She tells Molly's mother 'Charlie's seventeen now and Molly sixteen, old enough, I'd say. She even welcomes Molly into the family when she turns up to her door, pregnant. Mother allows her to stay and takes care of her. The things Mother does for her family creates a strong trusting friendship through the family. Mother is a bold representation of a Mother loving mother. All her actions help the boys develop their own friendships, ~~they~~ through Private Peaceful.