

The ruined maid by thomas hardy

Literature



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"The Ruined Maid" by Thomas Hardy The poem ends "The Ruined Maid" by Thomas Hardy proffered pertinent issues relative to an evolved image of a particular woman, known to the narrator as 'Melia. The narrator depicted from the elements of the literary work the traditional embodiment of women from where they originated. The message relayed by Hardy, therefore, reflects the social images created of women constituting the works of British literature.

The element of disbelief was elicited in the first paragraph when the narrator unsuspectingly met 'Melia in town donning fine quality clothes and exhibiting the air of affluence, to wit: "Who could have supposed I should meet you in Town? And whence such fair garments, such prosperity?" (Hardy lines 2 & 3). At the onset, therefore, the topic of transformation was symbolized through the quality of garments worn by the main character, 'Melia. Likewise, the poem was structured in a conversational or dialogue manner where the narrator apparently verbalize her observations and assertions; and the person she was talking to, 'Melia provides a response containing the term 'ruin' or 'ruined' consistently.

Readers who would not be familiar with the era within which Hardy wrote the poem could be lost in understanding that there is some form of irony relayed. Both characters could indeed be subject of prejudice and discrimination in terms of the low regard for country women, being represented to live a life of harness, poverty and absence of accessibility to comforts; which they both initially shared. This was manifested in the lines: "You left us in tatters, without shoes or socks, Tired of digging potatoes, and spudding up docks" (Hardy lines 5 & 6). The identity of the narrator was revealed in the reply of 'Melia in the last paragraph as she averred that "My <https://assignbuster.com/the-ruined-maid-by-thomas-hardy/>

dear--a raw country girl, such as you be" (Hardy line 23).

One strongly believes that ' Melia's persistent admonition of the term ' ruined' confirmed her admission that despite her physical transformation, the life she currently lives classifies her as immoral. By being ruined, she could have been a typecast woman who sells herself to men; and the physical flair needed to entice her trade. As such, one could deduce that there is a trace of bitterness in her tone as she repeatedly emphasized her stature as ' ruined'. Further, ' Melia could potentially communicate to the narrator that her life is not to be emulated for despite the transformed appearances, the fact that she in ' ruined' makes her forever soiled and immorally labeled. The last line effectively stressed ' Melia's reminder to the narrator that " My dear--a raw country girl, such as you be, Isn't equal to that. You aint ruined," said she" (Hardy lines 23 & 24).

Overall, Hardy's message was clear from the dialogue exchanged by the narrator and by ' Melia, in terms of the irony of belonging to the lowest class structure and apparent guises to cover the prejudices experienced by women at that time through trying to rise above the rest at whatever costs it would take. As depicted by ' Melia, the state of one's happiness in life could be transformed as long as one is prepared to accept social and moral consequences destined from one's immoral actions.

Work Cited

Hardy, Thomas. " The Ruined Maid." Norton Anthology Of British Literature: The Twentieth Century and After, Volume F. (Stallworthy/Ramazani). The W. W. Norton @ Company, Inc. New York. 2006. Print.