

Little red cap essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this essay I am going to look at the ways that Carol Ann Duffy uses 'Little Red Cap' The first poem in this book to show through theme and style exactly what the whole book has been written to represent. By using the main themes of this change in the first poem she can create a suitable introduction through just the first poem to 'break in' the readers. The first poem in 'The Worlds Wife' symbolizes a new direction.

The title is the rearrangement of the phrase 'The world and his wife' this phrase suggests that women 'aren't worth mentioning' and Duffy's rearrangement has been done to show a change in opinion. It suggests that Duffy has written this collection in order to bring a voice to the silenced women of history. The first theme that is noticeable in 'Little Red Cap' is the theme of change between Childhood and Adulthood. With this poem Duffy shows how this is not a merge but a direct jump into the unknown.

This is shown by the presence of the wood in the poem this symbolizes how the unknown looks appealing at first until it just becomes mundane. The line 'came at last to the edge of the woods' this shows the progression from the safety of childhood to the danger of adulthood. I believe Duffy includes this theme to show how in life you are never told how to be an adult, you are just expected to become one overnight and that this is a large pressure. In 'Little Red-Cap' there is also a theme of the desire for the unknown and how temptation leads astray.

This is portrayed by the wolf leading the girl astray, 'I knew, would lead me deep into the woods'. This relates to the title of the collect, 'The Worlds Wife' because in life it seems that women are never allowed to do things

wrong. That if women loose their way they are ridiculed whereas men are portrayed as followers and are therefore less venerable to criticism. ‘ Little Red-Cap’ also presents the theme of Love and first relationships. Here Duffy is clearly demonstrating a change, just as the book is showing a change in direction.

With the line ‘ Lesson one that night’ she is clearly indicating that this is the first experience of love for the character. And how due to this people are defenseless and this relates to the theme of the unknown. It is clear to reflect that by not knowing what to expect people become more vulnerable of those with experience. It is clear with the line ‘ clung till dawn to his thrashing fur’ that this experience is not loving and that due to this lack of experience innocent people are subject to things they cannot do anything about.

Here in this poem furthering this point the ‘ white dove’ symbolizes purity. Lastly the most prominent theme of ‘ Little Red-Cap’ is that of the power of women. This is not only expressed by the rearrangement of classic phrase for the title of the collection but also by the title of this poem. Red Cap is a poisonous mushroom and here Duffy is reflecting that although just like these mushrooms woman are beautiful they are strong as in relation the mushrooms are poisonous.

This powerful fight back is evident with the cutting line ‘ I took an axe’ which shows this power and strength of woman kind. How men have been dismissive of women but from now on that they will not stand for it, therefore reflecting the title ‘ The worlds Wife. ‘ This strength of women is also shown

through Duffy's style of writing. Toward the end of the poem Duffy becomes more aggressive which highlights further woman's strength. She has changed the character of the woodcutter to a woman, showing this shift in attitude that is present in all of Duffy's poems.

This aggressive nature is shown in the line 'one chop, scrotum to throat' which appears very gruesome and draws out powerful emotions in the reader, showing just how important this theme is to Duffy. Duffy also uses alliteration to emphasize her points within the text. The rhyme 'wolves lair, better beware' presents the fact that people do things even though they know better. The rhyme emphasis here makes the reader aware that this is a fact that has been 'shoved down people throats' yet still they refuse to take note of danger.

It's almost a mimic, to me it represents the things your parents tell you which you never listen to. Therefore I believe that through Carol Ann Duffy's style and theme of 'Little Red-Cap' she captures the main features that she will bring forward throughout the collection and therefore creates a suitable introduction for any reader. She presents the feminist theme of love and life and the strength of woman today. Therefore creating a permanent change in the way she thinks women should be viewed, pulling them out of the shadows and into the forefront of readers' minds.