

The power of women in chopin's story

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Task Role of Desiree as a Slave in the Story " Desiree Baby" Desiree Baby is a story by Kate Chopin, which she wrote in 1893. It represented the problems that were faced in the South: racism and slavery. She wanted to express the problems that women, especially slaves faced. Chopin was fighting for the rights and recognition of women in society. Desiree was adopted by the Valmonde family subsequent to finding her abandoned. Desiree later married to Armand who was from a family with a rich heritage and a lot of property. Her husband was a racist who treated people depending on the color of their skin (Gibert). He thought that people with black skin had no class, and were not human. Armand could not let his wife Desiree talk and could not listen to her opinion. This shows how women took a bottom position in society. He sometimes treated his wife, as well as the slaves who worked for him, with cruelty. Desiree had a baby boy who was African American. This made Armand chase him away because he wanted nothing to do with a black child. Although Desiree was a white woman, she was aware of how it felt like to be a black woman. She was treated in the same way as black slaves who worked in the plantations.

Desiree was more of a slave than a wife of a man with a high social rank. She listened to and followed what Armand would tell her. She could not argue with him at any point.

Throughout her life Desiree had not known of her heritage given that she was abandoned by her birth mother. When the Valmondes' picked her, they showed her all the love and care. This happened the same way first when she got married to Armand. He showered her with love, and they loved each other. This, however, was short-lived when she gave birth to a black child. She was treated with so much cruelty by her husband. What had been love

<https://assignbuster.com/the-power-of-women-in-chopins-story/>

was now hate. He hated her the same as he despised the slaves who worked in his farm. After he sent her way from his homestead, he made sure that he burnt all her belongings to ensure that none of her memories remained there (Gibert). This shows how he disrespected her and did not see her and his son as human beings. He was a complete racist who was full of pride and took everything for granted. He later came to know that his mother was also black and had gone into hiding (Gibert). He also came to know that his mother had also been a slave at a white man's plantation. This was unfortunate especially after the manner in which he had treated his wife and his slaves. Desiree represents the slaves of those days before the abolition of the slave trade as she was treated in the same way as African American slaves. When she was chased away, she went to another place to never come back. She did not go to her parent's home but chose to go her own way. She had been so humiliated by her husband and had a miserable life. This is the same way slaves disappeared to never show up again, for example, Armand's mother. It showed how racism and slavery had affected the other races in the earlier days. Chopin in this story is trying to show the power of women and how they should fight against traditions and norms.

Work cited

Gibert, Teresa. "Textual, Contextual and Critical Surprises in 'Desirée's Baby.'" *Connotations: A Journal for Critical Debate* 14: 2004-05. Web