

Short notes



"Two gentlemen of Verona" & "An Irish Rose" are the two heart touching stories written by A. J. Cronin. In an Irish Rose, the 14 year old Rose plays the central character of the story. She sacrifices her life to look after her baby brother who lost his mother when he was just one month old. In the "Two gentlemen of Verona" we find the touching story of Jacopo & Nicola, two brothers aged 12 & 13 who do odd jobs and live a hard life themselves to sustain and treat their elder sister Lucia who is suffering from tuberculosis of spine.

Both stories of A J Cronin are heart touching. In an analysis of the characters portrayed in both the works we can find certain similarities. As stated above we can see the characters themselves in a moral and sacrificial light wherein they are not thinking or living for themselves but for their respective siblings. If we go into the actual character portrayal too, we can find how the characters are dressed in rags to save even the smallest penny for their siblings comfort.

They do not even eat or dress well lest they have to spend any money, which can be found to have a better use for their siblings. In the Irish Rose as well as the Two Gentlemen of Verona, we find that the author finds hope for a better future of the world after meeting Rose, Jacopo and Nicolo. Never thinking for themselves, all three of his characters have fought to better the lives of their loved ones in every way possible. In both the stories the plot is set in a rousing manner and giving a detailed and graphic expression till the climax.

In the Irish Rose, the main character Rose Donegan has to earn for the family, buy milk for her youngest brother Michel. She had to cook, attend to the

children and father. With a slum child's elemental knowledge she had to do everything, even she would bargain the baker to extend her credit for an extra loaf. As in the case of the Two Gentlemen OF Verona, the writer himself becomes a character in the plot of Irish Rose. Along with the writer the rest of the characters too play a significant role in the plot to finally bring out the actual sacrifice of the three children.

In both the stories the importance given to the children's attitude towards work, love and responsibility shows how important the said characters are in the view of the author too. Herein we find the hope for a better world when these children grow up rather than the war ravaged time frame in which the stories are set. It was W. B. Yeats who said that, " Too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart". But through these stories Cronin has endeavored to prove Yeats wrong, as nicely as possible. He was also able to teach us the value of not running away from our responsibilities.