

How far do you agree
with sean o'casey's
verdict on brighton
rock essay



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I do believe Sean O'Casey's judgement of Brighton Rock is not altogether accurate and slightly harsh. I do see that Rose and Pinkie could be seen as stupid, but I find it harder to perceive Rose as an evil human being. I think it is important to take their age, lifestyle and ignorance into account before calling them stupid and evil. I believe Rose to be a genuinely likeable character who is slightly ignorant but certainly not evil.

O'Casey most probably sees her ignorance and lack of life experience as stupidity. When Pinkie takes Rose out for a drink she is so ignorant she does not even know a name of a drink to ask for: ' she didn't even know the name of a drink...

she had never known a boy with enough money to offer her a drink'. I can see how it is easy for a reader to assume this too. Rose does not seem to see the world around her as it actually is, for example she believes Pinkie to be glamorous and knowledgeable: " You know an awful lot about things, Pinkie' she said with horror and admiration'. She shows great naivety towards the realities of her life, for instance when Pinkie proposes it is clear to the reader that he is marrying her so that she won't stand as a witness in court for the murder of Hale: ' I only said as it would make her safe. A wife can't give evidence'.

Rose should be able to see that Pinkie is asking her to marry him not because he loves her but for something else, because he has not known her for very long and he does not treat her affectionately: ' His fingers pinched her wrist ' You're green,' he said again. He was working him self into a little

sensual rage... ' You don't know anything,' he said, with contempt in his nails'.

Instead she is extremely happy when he proposes to her: '... this is best'. Even on their wedding day Pinkie is malicious towards Rose: ' Christ how dumb are you'.

However Rose seems to think it is the best day of her life: ' but nothing can spoil today'. The way Rose allows Pinkie to treat her makes me believe she has masochistic tendencies in her character. Rose's attitude to her life and Pinkie could be termed stupid but I think it is something far more complex than that. I think because of her upbringing in the terrible Nelson Place: ' A flapping gutter, glass windows, an iron bedstead in a front garden..

. the awful little passage way which stank like a lavatory...

a staircase matted with old newspapers', Rose thinks little of her self and wants to better herself and I believe she thinks Pinkie is far better than her and she is lucky to be with him. This attitude could be due to stupidity but I think it is just because Rose has low self esteem. An example of this is when Pinkie tells her he is taking her to the Cosmopolitan hotel and she thinks she is not good enough for it but thinks Pinkie is: " You are,' she said, ' but I'm not'. Rose's lack of self-worth makes me feel empathetic towards her, not angry with her like Sean O'Casey seems to be. Another reason for why Rose is so in awe of Pinkie is perhaps because she knows what her future will be and she does not want it: ' made her face look as it would in twenty years' time, after the work and child-bearing', she probably thinks that if she is with

Pinkie her life will turn out more glamorous. If Rose believes this I think she is either incredibly naive or stupid.

I feel that Rose's love for Pinkie is quite frightening at times. I find it frightening that she loves him so much she will go against her religion and make a suicide pact with him because she knows he is going to hell and she cannot stand the thought of spending eternity away from him: ' It was said to be the worst act of all, the act of despair the sin without forgiveness; sitting there in the smell of petrol she tried to realise despair, the mortal sin, but she couldn't; it didn't feel like despair. He was going to damn himself, but she was going to show them that they couldn't damn him without damning her too: there was nothing he could do, she wouldn't do: she felt capable of sharing any murder'. Sean O'Casey describes her as stupid and evil and at this point in the book I can see that a reader may believe this too. It seems to the reader that Rose has been corrupted by Pinkie; he has really brought something bad out of her that makes her want to be damned with him.

Although suicide is, religiously, an evil thing to do I don't believe Rose is evil, I think she is just madly in love with Pinkie: ' A light lit his face and left it; a frown, a thought, a child's face: she felt responsibility move in her breasts; she wouldn't let him go into that darkness alone'.

Rose's love for Pinkie comes across maternal and this explains why she has such trouble with the thought of being without him. Although Rose's devotion to Pinkie seems quite scary it is also quite admirable that she will do anything for him, even sacrifice her place in heaven; this could be considered to be an act of stupidity but it is certainly an act of dedication.

When you first look at Pinkie's character he seems to be a stereotypical evil
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character. The way in which Pinkie talks makes me think he wants to be an evil film-like gangster: ' You should read the inquests'. Pinkie desperately wants to be a respected villain like Colleoni and the fact that no one will treat him in this way, I believe makes him more bitter: ' he had to show someone he was - a man.

.. he suddenly shouted aloud, ' I want service,'... a voice said ' there isn't a table'.

Like a typical evil character, Pinkie seems to want to provoke people, he tries to scare Rose with the vitriol bottle: " It burns,' the boy said. ' Smell it,' and he thrust the bottle under her nose'. Pinkie also commits murders, he even has one of his own gang, Spicer, killed by Colleoni's men: ' He heard Spicer scream, ' Pinkie,' and saw him fall'. I believe Pinkie is definitely not stupid, I think he is too ruthless and calculated to be called stupid.

After Spicer has been killed, on Pinkie's orders, Pinkie does not feel any remorse, he just thinks about how Spicer's death will be beneficial to him: ' The nosy woman didn't have a witness now, except for Rose, and he could deal with Rose'. Pinkie had a terrible childhood in Nelson Place. I believe it is his childhood that has made him into the vile character he is, all his fears and nastiness are due to his childhood. He fears sex because he heard his parents as a child having sex and it made him believe it was a horrific, ugly ritual: ' It was Saturday night.

His father panted like a man at the end of a race and his mother made a horrifying sound of pleasurable pain. He was filled with hatred, disgust,

loneliness: he was completely abandoned: he had no share in their thoughts,
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for the space of a few minutes he was dead... it was as if the nightmare couldn't go further.

.. nd for a few seconds he believed he was back in Nelson Place'. I believe he associates sex with abandonment: ' he was completely abandoned' and this is why he is nasty to Rose because he is confused by her role; she is maternal towards him but yet he has to have sex with her. He tells her when they have sex, that they are committing a mortal sin: ' he pushed her against the bed ' It's mortal sin' he said'.

He is also nasty to Rose because she shares his background and he resents her for it, he is afraid she will drag him back there: ' he thought he had escaped forever... nd now extreme poverty took him back'.

Rose represents failure to Pinkie because she comes from a bad neighbourhood and is timid and unglamorous. I think she reminds him too much of his past, she comes from the same district as him, and that is why is so unpleasant to her: ' He was scared, walking back towards the territory he had left - Oh years ago'. Pinkie and Rose also have their religion in common: " You a Roman? ' the boy asked. ' Yes,' Rose said. ' I'm one too,' the boy said'.

However Pinkie finds their shared beliefs of Catholicism to create a sense of unity. It is through his religion he realises he doesn't actually hate Rose and that he actually has a strange, twisted affection for her: ' it was quite true - he hadn't hated her; he hadn't even hated the act. There had been a kind of pleasure, a kind of pride, a kind of - something else'. When Pinkie realises

that he feels some kind of affection for Rose it is clear to the reader that <https://assignbuster.com/how-far-do-you-agree-with-sean-ocaseys-verdict-on-brighton-rock-essay/>

Pinkie is not evil to the core and that he is capable of some sort of love.

However earlier in the book the reader finds out that Pinkie also loved Kite, as if Kite were his father: ' when Kite had died in the waiting-room at St.

Pancras, it had been as if a father had died'. The reader knows that Pinkie is able to love and I believe if he were completely evil he would love no one.

Even though Pinkie accepts that he feels a strange kind of affection for Rose he still is prepared to let herself commit suicide: ' I'll take a walk an' you stay here. When it's over, I'll come back an' do it too'. This is without a doubt an utterly evil thing to do; he is letting Rose go against her religion and commit suicide because she thinks that he will to, when he actually has no intention of killing himself.

Pinkie accepts hell but not heaven: " Of course there's Hell. Flames and damnation,' he said... ' And Heaven too,' Rose said.

.. ' Oh, maybe,' the boy said'. I think Pinkie cannot envisage Heaven because he has never experienced happiness, so an eternity of happiness and peacefulness is alien to him. Therefore he can only imagine Hell because he only knows sin, unhappiness and evil, and he thinks that is where he will end up. In conclusion I do not find Rose either stupid or evil, I think she is just ignorant and naive and that is why she falls in love with Pinkie.

I do not find Pinkie stupid but I do think he is evil, but through no fault of his own. His terrible childhood I think is responsible for the terrible young man he became. Although it became apparent that Pinkie was capable of a kind of love it was not enough in my mind to redeem him for the ruthless murders he committed or the terrible way he treated others.

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