

Symbolism in the secret life of bees



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Symbolism represents ideas by the use of symbols and is not meant to be taken literally. It helps take writing to an insight and helps it to connect better with the reader. In *The Secret Life of Bees*, by Sue Monk Kidd, symbolism is used throughout the novel. Kidd uses it to help the reader understand the content with a deeper meaning. Symbolism is generally an object representing something else, but it can sometimes mean something completely different for a superior understanding. In the novel, Kidd uses a variety of symbolism, one of which are the bees.

The protagonist, Lily Owens, lost her mother when she was 4. In the present story, she is 14 years old and stays with her father, T. Ray, and housekeeper, Rosaleen. In the novel, bees symbolize a variety of things. The queen bee represents the mother Lily is looking for. She's motherless but eventually finds someone like a mother, who is August Boatwright, a beekeeper. She leaves her abusive father and starts a search for her new life. As Lily starts her journey, she is like a worker bee and has been separated from the other worker bees. Isolate a honey from her sisters and she will die soon (Kidd 136). As this quote states, Lily is the lonely sister and is looking for her sisters. Lily is very lonely without her mother, but then finds a beehive, as a community, at the Boatwright's. Her mother's name, Deborah, also translates to literally bees. The Boatwright's house symbolizes the beehive, where after going, Lily becomes happy again. It seems like she found her way back into a healthy hive. Lily later starts seeing herself in the bees, August tells her that bees have a secret life they don't know about. Kidd also uses other things to symbolize like Our Lady of Chains and the moon.

Our Lady of Chains symbolizes the power to overcome any difficulties with the love of the Divine Mother, Our Lady of Chains. At the end of the novel, Lily becomes close to Our Lady, she visits her each day. Our Lady showed up in response to all the hardships they faced throughout the novel. I never get tired of looking at her thick arm jutting out, her fist like a bulb about to explode. She is a muscle of love, this Mary (Kidd 302). They painted a heart on Mary's breasts, and their worship revolves around it. Also, on Mary Day in August, she was chained and then unchained by the daughters of Mary. After that, Lily tells August about the truth and everything else there were left to know about her. All in all, Mary is the force that guides the women.

In the novel, the moon symbolizes mystery. The moon was always a mystery to the world, but when the government plans to send the first person to the moon from the United States. August tells Lily it marks the end of an era because the moon has always been a mystery to everyone. The moon goes away and comes back, which also represents rebirth. Yes, you are, because as long as people have been on this Earth, the moon has been a mystery to us. Think about it. She is strong to pull the oceans, and when she dies away, she always comes back again (Kidd 113). The phases of the moon represent the dying away and coming back again. August now thinks it's going to be a big science project and not a mystery. Overall, the moon symbolizes mystery and rebirth.

In conclusion, Kidd uses a variety of symbolism to help get a deeper understanding of the story. She uses bees to represent Lily on her journey. Our Lady of Chains represents their divine mother. Lastly, the moon represents mystery and rebirth. There are so many other things in the novel

that symbolize something else, again, for a deeper understanding of the novel. Symbolism is used a lot in the novel and it's what most authors use. It helps connect better with the reader.