

# Literary analysis on midsummer by manuel arguilla essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Set in a very hot summer day, Manuel Arguilla's *Midsummer* is a story with a very short and simple plot. It is basically a story of a man meeting a very beautiful Filipina woman by the well in a sizzling summer day. It starts off with the man and his cart tied to his bull on a long dry road when he suddenly sees a woman who stood unmoving watching the man come towards her. The woman was described from head to toe with such detail as the man looked from a distance. The man followed the woman to the where she went and led him to the well under a big mango tree. He watched her as she filled the jar and placed it on top of her head. The woman leaves and the man goes to the well and gathers water for his bull and himself while still thinking of the woman.

The man then eats his dinner under the shade of the tree when the woman comes back to refill her jar. As she fills her jar the man invites the woman referring to her as Ading, to eat with her. The woman then addresses the man as Manong and thankfully refuses his invitation to eat as she herself just ate. They converse and suddenly the woman spills water all over the food and apologizes by getting him water but the Manong insists that he fetch it from the well. Ading notices Manong's well built muscles and body as he fetches water, showing her how strong he is. He drinks his water as Ading lifts the bucket for him. The story ends with Ading inviting her to their home and Manong follows her with his cart and bull.

The setting of the story was just appropriate showing the intense sexual heat and tension between the man and the woman. It was evident that these two had some attraction towards each other and had an appreciation for each

other's physical traits. Arguilla had made the story so detailed I felt that each description instantly painted a picture for me in my mind and I did not have to imagine much. He described the setting of the sizzling heat through the sensory details available to him. The plot was simple and short narrating a meeting of a man and woman. The real story is really short but it was through the author's intricate narration starting from the man's perspective and later on to the woman's, added so much depth to the overall. Showing both points of view of Manong and Ading gave me or the reader a peek into both their minds. This subtly gave a hint of how they felt towards each other. Although these elements had their part to play the main actor was the setting and how it reflected the characters' emotions and feelings.

The setting was clearly established for the first few paragraphs as Arguilla describe the intense heat through the arid land and mirages that formed on the road. In the first paragraph he described the road where Manong and his bull were traveling along. "The road seemed to writhe under the lash of the noonday heat; it swung from side to side, humped and bent itself like a fleeing serpent, and disappeared behind the spur of a low hill on which grew a scrawny thicket of bamboo." This started the story for me and it really made me feel the immense high temperatures on where the character was in. It gave me that mental image of those heat waves while walking on the dry dirt.

The story continues as the man in the scouring heat sees a woman from the cart he sat in. In the point of view of the man the woman is describe in such detail from what she wore on her head to her being bare foot. "A gayly

stripped kerchief covered her head, the ends at the nape of her neck. She wore a homespun bodice of light re cloth with small white check. Her skirt was also homespun and showed a pattern of white check with narrow stripes of yellow and red.” The man followed her and watched the woman as she filled her jar and spilled it on her body. “ The single bodice instantly clung to her bosom, molding the twin hillocks of her breast, warmly brown through the wet cloth.” In these details the author made me feel the tension and the attraction of the man to the woman. It was very distinct and evident that the man had desires for this woman.

On the part and perspective of the woman she also had her part to play and when the man fetched water from the well she observed and admired the physique of the man. “ He lowered the bucket with his back to her, and she had time to take in the tallness of him, the breadth of his shoulders, the sinewy strength of his legs. Down below in the small of his back, two parallel ridges of rope-like muscle stuck out against the wet shirt. As he hauled up the bucket, muscles rippled all over his body.” It was just like how the man in his observation of the woman, she had an attraction for the other. The detailed accounts of their points of views show the two sides of physical desires for each other under the blazing sun.

Aside from the high temperatures of the dry land another prevalent motif in the story is water mainly the well. The water in the story highlighted each other’s body and it was by the well they met and got to know each other. A mix of the heat and water was perfect to set the mood of the whole plot. The inescapable heat had them going to the well and collect water. Their wet

bodies that showed through their clothes was like an advertising poster to the other, showing their physical selling points that attracted each one. Water was present all throughout the story not helping relieve the intense heat of the sun and tension between these two characters. It did the opposite and added to the prevailing the heat of emotions.

Midsummer by Arguilla was a perfect kind of example on how the setting can show the mood of the characters. It reflected the sexual heat between Manong and Ading. The hot summer of the place truly made me experience a different kind of heat in the story. Elements like the well and the water added depth and showed the masculinity and femininity of the characters in the story. A simple love story that was well presented through the elements like setting and motif.