

Free literature review on exploring the hidden sides of lifes passion

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



The aim of this essay is to present you with the reflections drawn upon the readings of the novel ' Passion' written in 1987 by Jeanette Winterson. Jeanette Winterson has been widely acknowledged within the borders of the literary community as one of the writers who succeed in bonding their stories closely to mystery and passion, somewhere between magic and reality. This paper will present you with the main idea of Passion and will prove that people's lives are conquered by Passion in such a way that Passion can neither be considered exclusively benefactoring nor destructive. It depends on the way people deal with it. Therefore, although Passion has always been something which people have been desiring in their lives, they are not able to deal with it in such a way that they can benefit from it. The paper aims at proving that people even may even end up to experience their self - destruction in terms of being conquered by their high passion which may approach the limits of madness itself.

The novel is built around the lives of two people. There is a man and a woman of different origins, who are brought together and they meet, driven by their destiny. Jeannette focuses on the fact that destiny is what plays the major role in life's events. No matter how many decisions people may make, there has always been this unknown part in their lives, which moves the strings of their lives in such a way, so that they find themselves in certain crossroads, which demand for their making up their minds and deciding upon the direction they will follow.

It may sound like a typical love story, but Passion is definitely a lot more than that. It is not a simple romantic story which emphasizes on the feelings experienced by two people who fall in love with each other. Neither can it be

considered to be a romance which has fallen short of the expectations of the people who have felt this intense feeling of love.

' Passion' is a novel which portrays the ambiguity existing in each one of people's personalities. There is no just white or black in life. Jeannette reminds us that there is always grey, as well. What is that supposed to mean? It is simply the fact that there has always been more than one aspect of each issue in life. People may hold certain beliefs and they may treat life in a certain way according to their principles. But there are always these moments in life that people find out that their principles and their established attitude towards life does not necessarily help them anymore. They witness themselves to step on their principles and behave in a totally different way from the one they have been used to. In other words, passion which may hug any person in any instance of his/her life, may end up in turning people upside down. People start looking at themselves in the mirror and they do not seem to realize or recognize who they really are. Yet, they feel content because they have managed to find the courage and follow the orders and demands as drawn by their own passion. It takes lots of courage to be able to follow what one's passion drives him/her to do.

Winterson seems to know that pretty well and she appears to wish to share that piece of knowledge with her readers. Another aspect of passion which is enlightened on behalf of Winterson in this novel, is the fact that passion is like a double edged knife. Although passion which is a kind of intense love may lead people to reveal secret abilities that they have been hiding in themselves, it may also lead them to their self-destruction.

The era which has been chosen on behalf of the writer to be used as the

socio-historical context of her story is not chosen by luck. Winterson manages to portray the passionate nature of her heroes and heroines within a period in which humanity experienced the terror and destruction of the wars caused by Napoleon. What was the hidden force behind Napoleon's decisions and actions? Napoleon was a passionate leader who had been totally conquered by his wish to conquer the world. This passion of his did not only cause harm to himself but to humanity, as well.

This socio-historical context seemed the perfect setting to Winterson, so that she could unfold the characters she had in mind. There is Henri, a simple French soldier, who decides to follow Napoleon throughout his fights. Henri experiences the collapse of Napoleon's passion when he witnesses the Russian ruin. What is extraordinary is the fact that Winterson draws the portrait of Henri's passion for the woman he falls in love with, in parallel with the portrait of Napoleon's passion for victory. The Russian ruin is used in the hands of the writer in such a way that Winterson manages to prove that nothing holds one side. There is no real victory in any war, since each victory has been built upon the sacrifices of certain number of human lives. What is more, there is no real victory, since no victory has ever stayed in life without a defeat. Winterson seems to wish to shed light on the fact that each concept in universe exists as a pair of its two contradictory elements. Victory can have a meaning if defeat is taken into consideration.

On the other side, readers meet Villanelle, the woman that Henri falls in love with. Villanelle carries her own mystery and ambiguity. She is the daughter of a Venetian boatman. Villanelle has red hair and she is web-footed. She falls in love with Henri and these two persons are driven to experience and

live their passion. But somewhere along the procedure of their growing up, they realize that this passion of theirs bears its own catastrophic elements. Napoleon is destroyed in the Russian expedition and likewise Henri is destroyed when he decides to kill in the name of his love. Winterson has written in her novel ““ Whoever it is you fall in love with for the first time, not just love but be in love with, is the one who will always make you angry, the one you can't be logical about.”.

Winterson emphasizes on the fact that love which has always been considered to be an innocent feeling, has always been able to affect people and lead them to feel a tyrannical power over them. People are led to actions which may not seem at all reasonable because of their love. Henri sees himself to commit a crime. This crime is caused by the intense passion of his love. This is the point at which Winterson poses the underlying question. Is it the power of Henri's passion which drives him to be a killer? Can Passion reveal aspects of one's self which have always been existing but they were not given the chance to come to light? Or could it be that passion creates and gives birth to elements which had not existed within one's inner world before?

Another equally important question is the long term effect of any kind of passion on people. Could it be that Henri drove himself to committing a crime and killing somebody, because his love passion had come to its end? In other words Winterson asks a fundamental question. Everything in nature goes through a circle of existence. Everything is born, grows up and then reaches its end with its own death. So, logically, each passion although it may seem unbeaten, it is condemned to follow natural rules. As a result,

each passion, no matter how strong it may be, it is condemned to be destroyed, to die. Another passion is necessary in order to replace the dying passion. So, Henri, replaces his love passion, with his passion of madness. He acts in such a way, so that he experiences the madness of becoming a killer. No matter the way people act under their passion, one thing is for sure. Human life is in a constant interplay with passion and it takes lots of time and speculation in order to find out and define the real nature and effect of passion.

Works Cited

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