

# Love is madness

Business



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American Author, Marilyn French once said, “ Well, love is insanity. The ancient Greeks knew that. It is the taking over of a rational and lucid mind by delusion and self-destruction. You lose yourself, you have no power over yourself, you can’t even think straight.

” William Faulkner must have been reading up on some Marilyn French when he brought the character Emily Grierson to life. He characterizes her as a very stubborn, mentally unstable, and controlling person who lets her feelings control her actions which ultimately results in an unfavorable, morbid outcome. Faulkner portrays Emily as an extremely stubborn woman. When the townspeople come to ask her about paying her taxes she commands them to “ See Colonel Sartoris. [She] has no taxes in Jefferson” four different times (306). She cuts the men off before they can explain further that Colonel Sartoris has been deceased for almost ten years.

This scene plays into her insanity as well. Faulkner displays Emily as very mentally unstable. She cannot identify that someone she knows has been dead for almost a decade. And her insanity shines through further when she refuses to accept her father’s death. When the townspeople came to comfort her “ She told them that her father was not dead.

She did that for three days...” (308). For at least three days she kept her father’s deceased body in her home and refused to admit that anything was wrong and, for a certain period of time, also refused to let anyone bury him. The townspeople chalked it up to grief and said “ Poor Miss Emily” rather than accusing her of being crazy (310). Clearly the townsfolk didn’t recognize Emily’s controlling nature at the time of her father’s passing.

Faulkner also expresses what a control freak Emily really is when she refuses to let Homer leave and even goes to the extent of poisoning him. After demanding that “[She] wants arsenic” from the druggist, the readers infer that Emily immediately goes home and poisons Homer to prevent him from ever leaving her (310).

After Emily’s death when the town finally discovers that she’s forced Homer into “ a long sleep that outlasts love” they also discover “ a long strand of iron-gray hair” on her pillow beside the body (315). Not only has Emily murdered the man that she loved to prevent her from being alone, she sleeps next to his dead body every single night. William Faulkner gave his character Emily a very twisted mind. In her attempt to escape her lasting loneliness, she let her headstrong, controlling, nature affect her decisions; which resulted in Homer’s tragic death and the loss of any sanity she possibly had left.