

Symbolism starts her
difficult journey in a



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Symbolism in Eudora welty's short stories K.

Baargavi, Ph. D. Research Scholar, PG and Research Department of English, Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai-30 E-Mail ID : term symbolism is nothing but a literary element used in literature. It helps the readers to understand a literary work. Symbolism is everywhere. Symbolism exists whenever something is meant to represent other meaning. In Greek mythology phoenix is a bird with long span of life time.

This phoenix is often used as a symbol for regeneration or reborn. The phoenix is a bright red and golden colour bird. While nearing the end of its life it travels to Heliopolis , the city of the sun , to die and reborn from ashes. This is just one instance. Phoenix in literature is often used as a symbol. There are many such symbolism used in literature.

One can take the Southern Writer Eudora welty's works as an example of study symbolism. Eudora welty uses many themes throughout her literary work to illustrate racism , responsibility , initiation, belonging and coming of age etc. Welty is often influenced by Greek mythology and beliefs. She also uses simple symbols like key and exhibit it strongly as a symbol of happiness. Therefore, the major aim of the paper is to explore the mythological symbols and other elements in Eudora welty's short stories. Phoenix Jackson is walking to Natchez, missippi, in order to obtain medicine for her grandson.

Despite her advanced age, she undertakes this increasingly difficult journey out of unconditional love. Phoenix the African American Woman starts her difficult journey in a bright frozen day early morning in the month of

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December. Phoenix Jackson coming along a path through pinewoods. She was old small, her head tied in a 'red rag', she wore a long dark colored striped dress and a bleached sugar sacks as an apron, carrying a thin, small cane made from an umbrella. She looked straight ahead. Wrinkles on her face promise us her age. She went on up and down the hills She boldly warns "Out of my way, all you foxes, owls, beetles, jack rabbits and wild animals.. . Keep out from under these feet, little bob-whites.... Keep the big wild hogs out of my path. Don't let none of those come running my direction. I got a long way.

" p. 241. She undertakes this difficult journey for her sick grandson. Finally with never dying aim and high spirit she reaches her destination to get medicine for her grandson. In mythology the bird phoenix lives for centuries before burning into ashes. Many countries believe in mythological stories about phoenix bird. Great people are compared to phoenix because of their tireless dedication, confident and hard work.

Even common people are enchanted with this mighty bird's story. In Endora Welty's short story 'Wornpath' she named her character 'Phoenix Jackson'. Phoenix Jackson, as a character is the epitome of what the phoenix symbolizes, hope security and a promise for the future. Phoenix Bird has different name in different countries they believe in different history of Phoenix bird, however the conclusion of this mighty bird is 'immortal'. Like Phoenix bird's enchanted strength, Welty's phoenix moving towards her destination. She kept moving strongly. Phoenix the woman has many

similarities to phoenix the bird. Additionally she is wearing a 'red rag' on her head.

This clearly symbolizes the color of the phoenix. Phoenix bird undertakes a journey to 'Heliopolis'. Similarly Welty's phoenix advanced age suggests that she is on her own journey. Repeated references are made to phoenix, age, she describe herself as the oldest person she knows. She says " My senses is gone. I too old.

I the oldest people I ever know". Any kind of injury suffered out in the open and alone like she was in the middle of the winter could have resulted in death. Unfair obstacles that Phoenix must have confronted in her entire life. Yet she made it through them all un-harmed and her spirit still intact. The Key : Pulitzer Prize-Winner Eudora Welty's short story 'The Key' is taken for symbol.

Like many of Welty's stories 'the key' set among people from the poor, rural south and explores the depth and limitations of human communication. This story is set in 1930's train station, Albert Morgan, his wife Ellie Morgan and the other passengers are waiting there. It is about the key and how each individuals responds to it particularly albert takes it as his possession and overwhelmed with enjoyment and satisfaction. Keys are important object in our daily lives, though never give them a second thought. They open doors and beyond the doors are things that provide us with comfort and happiness. Welty successfully explores how a small object can give a deep enjoyment and can unlock the lost happiness of an individual.

Almost treats the key like his second life and his happiness is infected to his wife also. Keys are commonly associated to unlock any locked objects. Here we can find this lifeless small object add a new life to the protagonist by triggering and lost happiness and delight.

It is a custom to visit the Niagara falls on a Wedding trip, to start a happy life. In a railway station passenger are waiting along with this deaf and dumb couple. Every one are waiting with patience. A red-haired young men standing in the corner of the room playfully tossing a key up and down in the air. Then in a moment, he drops the key on the floor. Everyone, except Albert and his wife, looked up for a moment. On the floor the key had made a fierce metallic sound.

Albert picks it up quite slowly with wonder written all over his face and hands, as if it had fallen from the sky. His fingers clumsy and blurring while touching it. In an excitement, with overflowing of an happiness he says. “ It is a symbol of something – something that we deserve, and that is happiness.

We will find happiness in Niagara Falls”. This makes him own whelmed with happiness, he sees it as a symbol of ‘ happiness’, the key he sees to unlock the cost happiness. With a feel of electrification he secretly hides the key in his pocket. A small object key are symbols of opening and closing. Locks and keys affect our lives in various ways.

Endora Welty beautifully employs how a small object can sometimes makes a great change within the individual. The short story “ Worn path” with the ends of Phoenix Jackson’s destination, where she confronts physical and

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mental hardships of her age. She undertake this challenging Journey for her little grandson. Endora Welty magnificently portrait this mighty Phoenix character similar to the immortal bird Phoenix. Finally Welty proves her skills by adopting mythological symbol and a common symbol.

In the story "The Key" the Protagonist was enchanted with happiness and treats the key as his beloved possession. His enjoyment infects his wife ellie too. Perhaps he had even decided that it was a symbol not only for happiness with ellie, but of something else-something which he could have alone, for only himself, in peace, something strange and unlooked for which would come to him. Bibliography Selected Stories of Eudora Welty "Worn path" Selected stories of Eudora Welty "The Key" www.thewritingnut.com.