

Yentl: the yeshiva boy

Literature



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Summary Writing: "Yentl: The Yeshiva Boy" "Yentl: The Yeshiva Boy" is a story of a young girl who wants to know more about the world in the time when women are forced to domestic drudgery. Set in the time when women are not allowed to go to school, she shuts the windows and draws the curtains when reading with her rabbi father at home so no one will know their then considered blasphemous activity. As her father dies, she runs away to escape from the women's predicament of that era. "What becomes of a girl when wedding is over?" (Singer et al. 65). She cuts her hair, wears her father's clothes and takes on a new name, Anshel to complete her disguise as a man.

As she sails forth to search for fate, different from what lies back in her hometown, she encounters a man named Avigdor, a man with wisdom and intelligence who becomes her study mate and competitor in class. "Yentl, you have a soul of a man." (Singer et al. 149). As the two enjoy each other's company, Anshel falls for Avigdor secretly. They become so close to each other to the extent that Avigdor feels something peculiar toward Anshel. As the story goes on, it is disclosed that Avigdor is a broken man who is rejected by his fiancée's family as they become aware that his younger brother committed suicide. Anshel meets Avigdor's former fiancée, Hadass; the latter falls for her, not knowing her true identity. Avigdor begs Anshel to marry Hadass so he can still be close to her. "She had a soul of a man and a body of a woman." (Singer et al. 165). Resistant at first, Anshel eventually grants Avigdor's desperate request just to see her love at peace. Due to this, she increases confusion in her life by marrying Hadass. She reasons out that her action is an indirect vengeance to Hadass' family by rejecting Avigdor. As the illusion goes on for months, her situation of deceiving everyone becomes

unbearable. As a result, she leaves Hadass and meets Avigdor to reveal her secret. The madly surprised Avigdor does not understand it at first and even sees Anshel, Yentl this time, a demon. However, as Yentl discloses her story and how desperately in love she is with him, Avigdor calms down.

The story concludes when Yentl decides to go on with her search of knowledge and truth about life and leaves Avigdor with Hadass. Although the musical is different from the story in the book, they both talk about life in itself and its idiosyncrasies that fall in interference of the minds of the people born ahead of their times.

Works Cited

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Singer, Isaac B, Antonio Frasconi, Marion Magid, and Elizabeth Pollet. Yentl the Yeshiva Boy.

New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983. Print.