

Analysis of another fine mess by ray bradbury



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Doppelganger

The text under study here is called "Another fine Mess" written by Ray Bradbury. Bradbury in this story talks about two women Bella and Zelda who are new to the old age. The story is set in the middle of the summer where on typical late night the protagonists hear voices of two people carrying a piano up the street, which they assume to be ghosts of their childhood favourites Ollie and Stanley by Laurel and Hardy, who are in search for love. This is the basic idea one takes on the first reading of this text, but Bradbury portrayed those two ghosts as doppelganger of the two women Bella and Zelda as their part of personality which is still young and cannot admit the fact that they are old now and are not loved. In this short story Bradbury used the concept of doppelgangers to explain how unappreciation and not clear expression of love can lead to one forming a doppelganger of themselves that is exactly the ideal thing they want or is a part of their personality they do not want the world to see, these concepts are displayed beautifully by Bradbury using his wordplay and the vents that occur in the story.

The story starts with narrator describing Bella's neighbourhood as "old house on a old street with an old staircase" (393). The emphasis on word old is nothing more than a portrayal of old age that Bella is new to. Old house, old staircase and old street are also the metaphors used to describe her old age. Bradbury also says "had lived there for only few days it was all new to her" (393) which means that this old age was really new to her and the fact that she is appreciated less and not loved anymore is clear from the lines "so what can happen at night to a woman fifty five, fat, and ugly" (394). Also

the love she gets from her husband Sam isn't what she asks for and that's quite clear in the text. The stairs too here are used as an metaphor for her growing age.

The presence of the two doppelgangers is justified when bella went to check on the voices coming from down the hill " suddenly she was very cold"(395). She could do nothing but call her childhood dear Zelda. The two women stood on the edge of the hill and suddenly the time took half way around and they were back in the time when they were young and beautiful and they loved themselves the voice of the man here's a another finr mess you have got us into fascinated them the most because the doppelganger which is viewed as their childhood favourites ollie and hardy are actually a characters of a play they used to watch when they were young and now the same has became an part of their personality as they view the characters as their young beings , the time they were loved but couldn't just realised that , this became more clear once Zelda states that " maybe nobody told them"(398). " Or maybe they were told but still didn't believe them" (398).

The stairs here act as a line of age where at the top both the women are old but as they move down they see their doppelgangers as young selves. Zelda is the one to recognize the two ghosts as ollie and stan. She remembered everything what they were to say next and what is going to happen next , this shows nothing but how closely the women knew these ghosts which in real were their own anti-personality doppelgangers which they always wanted to be. Also the feeling of being unappreciated and not loved by people is quite visible when they are talking to the ghosts but people from around the houses starts yelling and shouting on them to stop and go away.

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Doppelgangers in this story are used by Bradbury to display the feeling of the protagonist “ and half way down the steps , hearing, feeling , shouting , crying themselves , and now laughing and holding to each other.....wildly clutching, grasping, trying to see”(402). All these emotions showed that how continuous and sudden their feeling were . Zelda also states at the end that the doppelgangers or the ghosts to not leave forever but come and visit them every once in a year so that they recall the time of their appreciation and lovingness. This also means that both Bella and Zelda have adopted the old part of themselves and made it a part of their personality.

Overall we can say that craving for things we love is natural but not appreciating what we have is not good and sometimes lead to formation of craving personality of which sometime even we are not aware of. In this story itself the two women are new to the old age , so what they see is themselves being young and loved in the form of two of their favourite childhood characters whom they watched growing up and can relate every part to. Moreover, the main idea of this short story runs along the feeling of love which natural and is common to every being on this planet regardless of the age. Bradbury displayed the feelings of the protagonists quite clearly with the help of the doppelgangers and portrayed the use of doppelganger with respect to the story quite well and effectively.

Cited Work

- Bradbury, Ray “ *A nother fine Mess*”