

Tony kytes and news of the engagement



The male characters in the three stories; Half Brothers, Tony Kytes and News of the engagement relate to women in different ways.

I will be discussing of the characters and their relationships, the mismatch of expectation that each man has - the impossibility of what he wants, the success of the relationships and how the outcome depends upon how the man responds. The genres of the three stories differ widely. The genre of Half Brothers is pastoral tragedy. The reason for this being that it is set in the countryside and the story is a general misfortune. It ends up in the death of the protagonist and the main characters.

It is told in 1st person although the character only becomes more active towards the end of the story as he commences his journey towards the fells. On the other hand, Tony Kytes is a Pastoral comedy. We call it pastoral comedy because once again the reader is given the feeling that it is set in the countryside. The mention of carts and the feather in hat of Millie, for example, make this much more perceptible.

It is a light hearted story which is also very funny and from the beginning there are no clues of death to suggest this is a tragedy. It is told in 1st person but the majority of the story feels as if it is told in 3rd person. When we find out at the end that it is not told in 3rd person but in 1st person, it makes the story feel more realistic. In news of the engagement, the story is more anecdote style. It isn't Pastoral because it is not set in the countryside. On the contrary, it is set in a town and Philip has to use a train to get to his mothers place.

It is the retelling of a minor amusing incident. The story is actually narrated in the 1st person and the narrator, who is also the protagonist, plays an active part in the story throughout. The characters in the three stories are described in very different ways dependent on the stories. In Half Brothers, the description of William Preston is given by his own son. He is described as 'an old bachelor' who was 'long past forty'. The reader is given an overall impression that as of recent he was unmarried and already in his late forty's, early fifty's.

There seems to be no bias in the narration of the story except any bias that aunt fanny may have. This is because he is only retelling the story from what he has already been told by aunt fanny. In the story of Tony Kytes, the description of Tony is told in a mixture of 1st and 3rd person. It is however obvious that someone who knows Tony locally is retelling the events. The description of Tony by the narrator is thorough and crisp.

The writer says, "I shall never forget Tony's face. 'Twas a round, firm tight face, with a seam here and there left by the smallpox, but not enough to hurt his looks in a woman's eyes..." Overall he is described as a handsome young man, liked by many women. The story of news of the engagement is told in 1st person, by Philip himself.

It is complicated to acquire a description of Philip seeing that he tells the story. Philip is too caught up in his own worries and so it results in the story coming out as an unbiased but incomplete account but there are clues to indicate what the real storyline is. In Half Brother, the protagonist does not actively enter the story until about half way through when he begins visiting

Helen. William Preston is gradually introduced and then after they get married, becomes the centre of events. At first he is just described as a bachelor, well over forty years old. Then as the story progresses and time moves on, the reader begins to understand his true character.

Not only is he jealous of Gregory but is also angry and violent toward him. We can even see the argumentative side of him which causes the narrators premature birth. There is no suggestion of any of these characters when he visits the house but only after marriage do all his bad natures slowly begin to crop up. In Tony Kytes, Tony is introduced from the beginning and so the reader gets to know plenty of the physical details of Tony, and some characteristic details. However, as the story progresses, more of the protagonist is revealed and we eventually know a lot more about his character indirectly, through the incident. But there is one clue to what his character is going to be like and this lies in what the narrator says; ' he was quite the women's favourite, and in return for their likings, he loved 'em in shoals'.

We discover through the story that indeed he can't resist the temptation of loving girls - in groups! In News of the engagement, Philip enters into the scene immediately, as he is the main character. Nevertheless, his character begins to be revealed in more detail to the reader, and we can see that when he is worried about something, he can't see the even obvious things. This is why the reader knows what is going to happen before Philip does. In each story, there is a mismatch of expectation or an impossibility of what the male character wants. Although the man wants the relationship to be good and have a ' happy ending' this does not happen.

In William Preston, this is seen clearly when he wants Helen to love him in return for the love he has shown to her. This does not happen however, and Helen gives all her love to Gregory, the only piece of memory left for her of her last husband. In Tony Kytes, there is also a mismatch of expectation as he ends up realizing that he likes all three women but that he cannot marry them all! He decides he wants to marry Hannah but he is rejected and eventually marries Millie. In News of the Engagement, there is a mismatch of expectation because Philip doesn't realize that his Mum will be announcing her engagement because he is too lost in his own thoughts.

He wants to be able to tell his mum about it in private but he finds that Mr. Nixon is come for dinner. The success of each relationship varies from story to story. If the male characters were able to adjust their expectations, the stories would have been happier ones. Although we cannot talk about the success of relationships in News of the engagement, we can say something about the other two stories.

In Half Brothers, the relationship between Helen and William Preston is very cold and unsuccessful. The only success that William Preston has is at Helens deathbed when she finally smiles at him, apart from this, no luck. It is not really William Preston's fault because as much as he tries to love Helen and enjoy his married life he can't. Helen doesn't love him, and to make things worse, she loves Gregory instead. In Tony Kytes, There is success in his relationship because although he is knocked about by two other women on his travels, he still manages to marry Millie, to whom he was engaged.

I feel that the incident is the mainly responsible for this story leading to resolution. The incident was able to determine who truly loved him and he was able to find out that this was Millie. No actual person was responsible for the success but if Tony had disallowed the two other women into his cart, life would've been much easier. In News of the engagement, Philips mum is responsible for Philip to be able to have the courage to plan to tell her the next day. This is, however, only because she herself was about to announce her own engagement with Mr. Nixon.

The incident, therefore, is also partially responsible. In each story, the outcome really depends how the men respond. In Half brothers, William Preston becomes very aggressive towards Gregory, whom Helen loves. This way, there is bound to be no success in his relationship and this is shown in his character throughout the story. In Tony Kytes, he deceives all three women into believing that he will marry them so there is an unpredictable outcome however by chance he ends up still marrying Millie.

In News of the engagement, the outcome doesn't really depend on how the men respond because Philip is too caught up in his own worries to realize that his mum will be announcing her engagement. In each story, the reader is led to either feel sympathetic for the protagonist or not to feel sympathetic. In Half Brothers, the reader does not really feel any sympathy for the protagonist. He has led himself into his own troubles by hating Gregory, and now Helens love is turned away from him. The reader is unable to give any sympathy to him because he does not adjust his expectations to improve the situation. If he had responded in a different way, such as

treating Gregory nicer, then he would have generated a little more sympathy because he played his part.

In Tony Kytes, the reader feels sympathetic for him, because he is a likeable rogue. Although he ends up with 3 women in the carriage, the reader can't help but feel sorry for him when he cannot get himself out of that situation. The reader feels even more sympathetic towards him as all 3 women fall out, and the sin is revealed. The reader also begins to like Millie for not rejecting him like the others. In news of the engagement, the reader is led to feel sympathetic for Philip because the reader is given clues about the ending of the story as early as the 2nd page of the story. The reader therefore knows what is going to happen and feels sympathetic for him because he is so wrapped up in his worries to realize this.

When the protagonist himself realizes, he himself wonders why he didn't see the clues his mum was giving him. A Nineteenth century story would have responded in different ways to the different stories. 'Half Brothers' is pastoral tragedy and so would have been set in a village or small town. Many people there would therefore have known each other quite well and we know this because the narrator says 'She never spoke of her first husband, and it is only from other people that I have learnt what little I know about him'. A 19th century audience would have justified the fact that Helen loved Gregory and her first husband more than she ever would love William Preston. But I do not think that a 19th century audience would have supported thought it right for Helen to marry William Preston as he was older than her by a big age gap and so soon after the death of her first husband and this is

supported by aunt fanny's behaviour when she is told that William Preston proposed to her.

Aunt Fanny was a good deal shocked at this; for, as I have said, she had often thought that my mother had forgotten her first husband very quickly, and now here was proof positive of it. Besides as aunt fanny used to say, she herself would have been a far more suitable match for a man of William Preston's age, than Helen who had not seen her four and twentieth summer' However, some people would have supported her because there was no social welfare so the women were usually dependent on the husbands income. In Tony Kytes, a 19th century audience would have responded repulsively to the fact that Tony was traveling in cart with another women (he was lucky they could only see one at a time). Morality was stricter and it was a general rule that a man didn't travel in a cart with another woman unless she was accompanied by someone or unless they were engaged. An example of 19th century response is Tony's father who advised him not to be riding with other girls and set his mind on one. But don't go driving about the country with Jolliver's daughter and making a scandal.

I won't have such things done....

' In News of the Engagement, there wouldn't have been much response from a 19th century audience because this is a typical 19C story. However, they would have wondered why Philip couldn't understand his mother's clues to him and couldn't settle down. We have seen that the relationships of the male characters in the stories have been different from each other. Half brothers' is Pastoral Tragedy, Tony Kytes is Pastoral Comedy and News of

the engagement is an anecdote. In Half Brothers, the development of the protagonists' character is slow; however in Tony Kytes and News of the engagement, it is much faster paced. There is not really any bias in Tony Kytes and News of the Engagement but we can see bias cropping up In ' Half Brothers', the bias aunt fanny has, as the story is being retold.

In all of the stories there is a mismatch of expectation, impossibility for what the man wants. In ' Half Brothers' the protagonist is responsible for the outcome of the story, whereas in Tony Kytes and News of the engagement, an incident is partially responsible as well as another person. In Tony Kytes' case it is himself and in News of the Engagement it is Philips mother. A 19th Century audience wouldn't have said anything much about Philip in News of the engagement, but they would have mentioned something about the other two stories. A 19th century audience would have found Tony's behaviour very wrong, because it was not right for a man to ride unaccompanied with a women except if he were engaged with her.