

Yellow woman

Literature



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Yellow Woman The mystery of love and the feelings related to it have always compelled humans to give it a thought if such things really exist? Is there something known as true love? Or it's just a trick to procreate? Love has always been one of the favourite subjects of fiction writers like Leslie Marmon Silko, James Joyce and John Updike. Silko in her work Yellow Woman describes a woman ragged between reality and myth while Joyce in his work tells about a boy stuck in the clutches of romantic idealism. Yellow Woman is a character which first appeared in 'The Man to Send Rain Clouds' which was an anthology of Kenneth Rosen and was published in 1974. It also appeared in Silko's 'Storyteller' in the year 1981. While in Kenneth's work, Yellow Woman was a lonely character, Silko in her work connected it to the land where she belonged as well as to the stories related to it. Leslie Marmon Silko was born in 1948 and was brought up in Old Laguna near Albuquerque, New Mexico. The character of Yellow Woman is very often found in her works as a character related to nature and as someone trying to relate herself to her cultures as well as her sexual individuality. The story of Yellow Woman is about an unknown female character that wakes up next to a man on the river side. She met this man the day before, when she had gone for a walk by the river. This mysterious man Silva seduced her. He calls himself Ka'tsina spirit and the girl "Yellow Woman". She is from Laguna Pueblo community and is quite influenced by the character of Yellow Woman also commonly known as Kochininako. The stories of Yellow Woman are quite famous and common in both Laguna and Acoma. Yellow woman or Kochininako went away with the whirlwind man or the Ka'tsina spirit. She left her tribe, family and friends to wander for years with him. Also stories of coyote which is a famous mythological character for the Native Americans

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are related to the Yellow Woman. The story where the grandfather of the unknown female narrator used to tell her about how coyote and badger went in the forest to hunt, and due to the dark, had to go to a nearby house. In the house lived a girl with light hair and eyes and agreed to sleep with them. Coyote wanted to be with her for all the time and so he very cleverly sent badger in a prairie dog hole saying that he saw something. As soon as badger went inside it, coyote blocked him with the stones. The unknown female character related herself to the Yellow Woman and the stranger to coyote. The story portrays the fine boundary between the myth and the reality. It is a sexual story which shows the sexual encounter of the girl with a stranger. It shows how she wanted to break free from the social rules and fulfil her desires. According to Joyce, one of the main reasons for the backwardness of Ireland is religion. He considered it to be one of the prime reasons due to which Ireland couldn't modernize like the other European countries. His story is about a boy who fell in love with his friend's elder sister without knowing what actually love is. He never had the guts to talk to her until one day when she herself told him that she wanted to go to Araby but could not due to some reasons. He decided that he would go for her to Araby and bring something for her. After a lot of struggle when he reached there, all the stalls were closed and he stood there realizing that he was foolish to think that the girl would ever be interested in him. He realized that he was disillusioned because of love. There were many modifications in the culture of America during the beginning and in the middle of the twentieth century. While in the early twentieth century, there were many transformations taking place like Georgia O'Keeffe's paintings revealing sexuality, in the mid of the twentieth century, America was struggling to

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come out of the after affects of the World War II. There were changes in all the spheres of life; be it art, architecture, culture and fashion. A story can only be understood if the entire cultural context related to it is provided beforehand. In order to appreciate Yellow Woman, one needs to be aware of Native American folklore. The stories are actually interrelated by a common theme of women's liberation. In the mid twentieth century America, women's liberation was one of the burning issues socially. Also in Joyce's Ireland, religion was considered to be a social limitation, which was contrary to women's economic and social liberation, since women's liberation actually helped to transform and modernize society faster. Each story has many related elements. The quirks and habits of particular characters and the underlying themes of stories can only be understood if the cultural and political background of the story is understood. References Bowen, Zack and James F. Carens. *A Companion to Joyce Studies*. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1984. Foster, R. F. *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972*. New York: Penguin, 1990. Schilb, John, and John Clifford, eds. *Making Literature Matter: An Anthology for Readers and Writers*. 3rd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006.