

Lilys experience and learning essay

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Introduction

“ Most people don’t have any idea about all the complicated life going on inside a hive. Bees have a secret life we don’t know anything about.”[CITATION Kid02 p 148 | 1033], Sue Monk Kidd ‘ s The Secret Life of Bees is much more than simply learning about secrets, it’s a tale where several themes and social issues are highlighted and the impact of all those on a young girl ‘ Lily Owens’ is discussed, who is just 14 years old white girl, she says that “ People who think dying is the worst thing don’t know a thing about life.”[CITATION Kid02 p 2 | 1033], as she felt that living with the memories of her mother’s death was very difficult for therefore she determines to set out and find the secrets about her mother who was killed when she was a child.

The story takes an interesting turn when Lily, enters adolescence, after a childhood which was full of unfavorable instances and ignorance, her father tells her that “ The truth is, your mother ran off and left you.”[CITATION Kid02 p 39 | 1033], she then leaves for the town Tiburn S. C; she read this name behind a black Mary picture that belonged to her mother. Her stay with the three black calendar sisters in that town makes her learn the art of bee keeping and soon she falls in love with the art that makes her discover the theme of forgiveness and responsibility. In this paper we will discuss that the issues of forgiveness and responsibility have played a key role in the transformation of Lily from an adolescent to a mature young woman.

While the story starts with a general understanding of Lily’s past and the incidents that shadowed her childhood, the entire journey of Lily as a main

character is surrounded by experiences where she learns and understands that how she has to forgive the people she loves, for their mistakes and to look forward to creating a better future. If we talk about the plot of the story we will see that by the end of the story Lily simply realizes the fact that whatever happened during her childhood, with her mother, was just an accident and it is her responsibility to understand this and take care of her future and life, she understood that she will have to face the truth and that is how she will be able to come out of the mental situation that she was into. Another important aspect of the story comes into place when Lily realizes that it may just not be possible to know the truth about the night when her mother passed away and just making guesses about the accident will lead her nowhere. She later says that ‘ Stories have to be told or they die, and when they die we can’t remember who we are, or why we’re here”[CITATION Kid02 p 133 | 1033]. Once she learns that her mother abandoned her, she displays maturity by understanding that it was not her fault and forgives her readily. With all the understanding and experiences that she faced, she gradually moves towards becoming a young woman, who is able to understand and control her emotions, she rose above the common feelings of hatred, anger, guilt and confusion that helped her to simultaneously learn the essence of forgiveness and responsibility which made her respect August.

Lily’s Past and steps to womanhood. . .

When Lily used to be at home she was deprived of her father T. Ray’s love, but with gradual experience that she faces and the kind of character she develops, she starts finding and believing in the love that she gets from

various other people and this helps her to understand and believe in the way situations are and that makes her to live her life according to the way it makes her live. Lily has a feeling in herself that forgiveness allows her that freedom which makes her understand the perspectives of other people, she sees a lot of people around herself but she believes that she does not have a family. She says that “ Well if you have a queen and a group of independent-minded bees that split off from the rest of the hive and look for another place to live, then you’ve got a swarm.”[CITATION Kid02 p 93 l 1033], this shows that Lily really felt alone like a bee in a swarm.

Lily’s encounter with her father makes her feel that she is not loved, being alone at home at times she was filled with anger and hatred towards her mother and father, however once she went away from her father, she realized the reason behind her father’s bitter nature she also understands that he was not a bad guy, its just that he wanted his marriage with her mother to work out. This understanding helps her to forgive her father as well and she feels better after doing that, there is another important observation in this incident which tells us about Lily’s very first initiative to take her own responsibility, Lily was not supposed to ask questions about her past, however she finds a different way to answer her inquisitive inner self and that was by writing down her thoughts in her notebook, this was a start for Lily to take the responsibility of her own self and to deal with the challenges that come across.

In another important incident where Lily forgives the people who arrested her and beat her due to color discrimination, but still she doesn’t hate them as with all her experiences she understands that why they did that to her

and being a mature woman she knows that flaws are there, everywhere and every one deals with them in their own way. The kind of maturity that she develops, in the absence of a motherly figure helps her to be strong and she never tries to find another similar support as she had forgiven August for all that happened and also accepted August's community with welcome hands. She mentions that ' I live in the hive of darkness, and you are my mother, I told her, you are the mother of thousand'[CITATION Kid02 p 204 | 1033]

In the last few chapters, we see that how Lily confronts her father and shows the level of change and maturity she has developed, she lived with the support from August's community and starts a new life with Zach, her boyfriend, the theme of forgiveness and responsibility successfully helped her to move from the keenness of adolescence to the qualities of womanhood. Lastly, we see another aspect of forgiveness and responsibility shown by T. Ray where he is not able to forgive himself as he understands that he has not been able to take the responsibility of his daughter and her upbringing, this not only makes him a bitter man but also fills him with hatred and disgust.

Conclusion

Kidd had very successfully highlighted the issues of responsibility and forgiveness in the entire book " In the Secret Life of Bees", and the best part is that he is able to carve the incidences of this story in such a manner that the main character ' lily', had undergone a drastic change due to these two aspects of life, in the above discussion we see the various incidents where the themes of forgiveness and responsibility come out, however if we notice we will also understand that these are the turning points in Lily's life as well,

hence it is clear that there is a great importance given to these two issues and it will not be wrong to say that the entire journey of Lily's life is related to these two issues and they help her to transform her from an adolescent to a mature young woman.

Works Cited

Kidd, Sue Monk. *The Secret Life of Bees*. New York: Penguin Group, 2002.