

Mule killers

[Family](#), [Mother](#)



Mule Killers Lydia Peelle's story 'Mule Killers' is a story about unrequited love and its consequences and the change from child to adult. 'Mule Killers' is told by a narrator, who is telling the story of his father meeting his mother. The father of the narrator tells his story about his unhappy youth to his son meantime they are working in a garden. The father's story takes place when he was about eighteen years old, and the time where tractors replace mules as a agricultural tool. The picture 'Stone City, Iowa' painted by Grant Wood gives a perfect picture how I understand the father's district. It is a village-like society from the former days. It is marked by farming and it is very idyllic and peaceful. It is very remarkable that the father has several losses in his story. To begin with he tells his son about Eula Parker. He was in deep love with Eula, but she did not noticed him at all. There are many examples in the text that shows her carelessness. When he gets out of the store and meets Eula and her friend the pale haired girl, Eula seems not interested in him — 'When they look up and see that it is him, they both politely say hello. Eula looks up at the store awning behind him ... '. When the father sees her again in the drugstore, he is convinced that she is jealous, but it is just another example of her carelessness — 'An enormous, beautiful open-faced smile: a smile with no jealousy hidden behind it at all '. The father ends up with the pair haired girl even he is still in deep love with Eula. The day he loses his beloved mule Orphan, he also gets shocked and very surprised, because the girl tells him about her pregnancy. The night when his father gets home from the hospital he tells the story about the pregnant girl. The narrator's father didn't understands the consequences of his actions. He convinces himself that it must be because of the loss of the mule Orphan or

the man in the hospital that drove him to tears. He knows that he has offended his father's feelings, because '... he feels like he has pulled the rug of manhood out from under the old man's feet.' , but first when he is old, he realizes why his father cried. It is not actually said in the text that the father marries the pregnant girl, but at the time, when the father was a boy it wasn't normal to get a child outside the marriage. It is also said indirectly that he loses Eula, and then he has to deal with the second best. It is unbelievable, but in the end of the text it is mentioned that he also loses her. Simon Armitage describes in his poem ' To His Lost Lover' the same loss as the father in ' Mule Killers ' experiences . The man in Armitage's poem has lost his love, and now he can only think and dream about the list of things that never happened with her. It is the same with the father, he can only dream and think about the life with Eula Parker. There are different themes in the story, and one of them is unhappy love and unrequited love. There are many kinds of love in the story. First of all the father loves Eula, but it is a unrequited love, because he never gets her and then he has to deal with the pair haired girl. The relationship between the father and the mule Orphan is another example of this unhappy love, which is introduced in the text. Another theme in the novel is the change from child to adult. The father is eighteen when all these things happened, but he seems very immature and unconscious about what happened around him. Even he is eighteen years old, he is still acting like a little boy. It is also said in the beginning of the novel that he is trying hard to hide things like fear, sadness and uncertainty. Another example of his immaturity is that he didn't understand his father's reaction when he told him that the pair haired girl is pregnant. He didn't

understands the seriousness in this connection, and he do not thinks about the consequences. In the fathers story he is going into a new stage in his life. He is no longer a kid, but he is not yet a grown- up.