

Love is greater than hate (tale of two cities)

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In Charles Dickens' novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, he illustrates the constant battle between love and hate. This battle is never-ending, but in the novel, I believe that love won, and that love is greater than hate. Love is displayed as love for family and friends, while hate is displayed as hate for the aristocrats and revenge. Lucie, a young girl who never met her father, grows into a strong woman and her love for her family is evident. Her love even saved her father from his despair. Miss Pross has love for Lucie, affectionately called Ladybird, and cares for her and her daughter, little Lucie, with her life.

However, there is also hate. Madame Defarge hates the aristocrats, mostly the Evremondes, and will go to any length to see them suffer. Sydney Carton hates everyone and hates life in general. Can love overpower these emotions; will love prove it is greater? In Dickens' novel, it did. Lucie loves her father, from the day they first meet, it is obvious, and the sentiment is soon shared by her father. After living a life of hatred and despair for 18 years, Lucie brings Doctor Manette love.

The first glimpse we see of this love that will save Doctor Manette from himself is when Dickens writes, " His cold white hair mingled with her radiant hair, which warmed and lighted it as though it were the light of Freedom shining on him. " (Dickens, pg. 50). After being with his daughter for awhile, her love freed him from his sufferings and brought him back to the man he used to be. The love that Lucie was able to give him, gave him the strength he needed to overcome the hatred that held him prisoner inside the Bastille for so long.

But even then, there were times when he relapsed into his old habits from prison. However, Lucie was the one who could bring him back from that despair and hatred with her love. As Miss Pross remarks, " In silence they go walking up and down together, walking up and down together, until her love and company have brought him to himself. " (Dickens, pg. 103). This just goes to prove how strong love is and how it is greater than hate. Doctor Manette went through a great ordeal of pain and suffering during his 18 years of imprisonment.

He held a hatred for the Evremondes because they are the ones who put him in prison after he tried to condemn them for their unlawful actions towards the peasants. Doctor Manette writes in his letter, " Them and their descendents, to the very last of their race, I Alexandre Manette, unhappy prisoner, do this very last night of the year 1767, in my unbearable agony, denounce to the times when all these things shall be answered for, I denounce them to Heaven and to earth. " (Dickens, pg. 342).

When he is recalled to life by his daughter Lucie, he forgets these troubles and is able to live a happy life. When Lucie falls in love with Charles Darnay, an Evremonde, Doctor Manette's old pain, hatred, and suffering arises. We see this illustrated when Dickens writes, " In a very curious look at Darnay: an intent look, deepening into a frown of dislike and distrust, not even unmixed with fear. " (Dickens, pg. 86). However, in chapter 10 of Book 2 entitled, Two Promises, Charles Darnay admits to Doctor Manette that he loves his daughter, Lucie.

To this, Doctor Manette exhibits that same dark look, but then turns to Darnay and says, “ If she should ever tell me that you are essential to her perfect happiness, I will give her to you. If there were → Charles Darnay, if there were (...) – any fancies, any reasons, any apprehensions, anything whatsoever, new or old, against the man she really loved – the direct responsibility thereof not lying on his head – they should all be obliterated for her sake. She is everything to me; more to me than suffering, more to me than wrong (...)” (Dickens, pg. 142).

Even with the history of the Evremondes haunting him every time he looks at Darnay, he is willing to put it all aside for Lucie, because he loves her so strongly. This is an excellent example of how love trumps hate. As an example of the battle of love and hate, one could take Miss Pross as being the personification of love and Madame Defarge as being the personification of hate. Miss Pross has been serving Lucie since she was a young girl and has therefore fallen in love with the young woman.

She will do anything for her and treats Lucie as if she were her own daughter. When Lucie has a little girl, Miss Pross cares for her the same way, with ample love and compassion. In one of the scenes in the novel, we are given a glimpse of the love Miss Pross has for Lucie. Dickens writes, “ Smoothing her rich hair with as much pride as she could possibly have taken in her own hair if she had been the vainest and handsomest of women. ” (Dickens, pg. 104). Madame Defarge, on the other hand, shows no compassion to anyone.

She hates all the aristocrats, but most of all, the Evremondes. This is for the same reason as Doctor Manette, because the peasants that were abused by the family were her family, and they died at the hands of the Evremondes. She has let this blind hatred lead her life and fuel her anger most of her life. We can see her hatred when she is knotting the coins in the cloth at the wine-shop, “ She tied a knot with flashing eyes, as if it throttled a foe (...) as if it were another enemy strangled. ” (Dickens, pg. 185, 186).

On the day of Charles Darnay’s execution, Madame Defarge goes to find Lucie, Doctor Manette and little Lucie to condemn them to death also. Instead, she finds only Miss Pross. Thus begins the largest battle of love and hate in the novel. Madame Defarge is determined, and armed, but Miss Pross is filled with the strength of love and loyalty. As they fight, Dickens describes Miss Pross’ strength by writing, “ Miss Pross, with the vigorous tenacity of love, always so much stronger than hate (...) held her round the waist, and clung to her with more than the hold of a drowning woman.” (Dickens, pg. 379).

After they struggle for a while, Madame Defarge tries to pull her gun out, but it works against her and suddenly Miss Pross is struggling with a dead body. Love has triumphed over hate in the truest sense as hate dies and love lives on. Sydney Carton’s character is introduced as a brilliant man who is bitter and depressed. He tells Darnay the first time they meet, “ I am a disappointed drudge, sir. I care for no man on earth and no man on earth cares for me. ” (Dickens, pg. 90).

He also admits to himself in that same passage that he hates Darnay, because he has all that Carton will never have, he is the man Carton will never be. Later on in the book, Carton tells Lucie that he loves her, but is glad that she will never love him, and then he says, " If my career were of that better kind and there were an opportunity or capacity of sacrifice in it, I would embrace any sacrifice for you and those dear to you (...) think now and then that there is a man who would give his life, to keep a life you love beside you! " (Dickens, pg. 159).

This shows that even though Carton has hate for life, he may still show love, but yet none of the two emotions has surpassed the other, until he fulfils his promise to Lucie. When Darnay is sentenced to death by guillotine, Carton sneaks in and takes his place. He sacrifices his life to give Lucie back her husband, to give her back the man that Carton never liked, even hated. The power of love surpassed that of the emotions of hate that Carton has towards Darnay, his love for a woman who will never love him back led his actions.

Even at the guillotine, we see the power of love overcoming hate as Carton helps a young seamstress overcome her fears of dying and gave her love before she died. This love was returned to Carton and gave him strength when he went up to die. His face when he died was, " The peaceullest man's face ever beheld there. " (Dickens, pg. 385). This further demonstrates that love can, and will always, be greater than hate. Love is by far greater than hate. Love can save, love can heal, and love can grow.

Hate is destructive, and that's its weakness, it has no grasp on people when love is present because love can rebuild all that hate has torn down. In Dickens novel, he gives plenty of proof to show just how powerful love is, and that even if, like Carton, we feel there is no love present, there is, and eventually we will see it. In his novel, we also see that even if hatred has claimed a person for so long, such as Doctor Manette, they can be saved with love.