

What does the novel
silas marner have to
say about the
relationship between
paren...

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‘ In the days when the spinning wheels hummed busily in the farmhouses... ’

Set in the small town of Raveloe, *Silas Marner* is a fable story, written by Romantic author George Eliot. ‘... a child more than all other gifts that earth can offer to a declining man, brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts’. The novel expresses the love between a parent and child. It represents a lonesome and secluded man’s life and how it is transformed by a petite and abandoned baby girl, who brings delight and luck to his life.

It tells of how Silas and the young girl, later named Eppie, spend the next 16 years of their lives together in their beautiful cottage where Eppie is smitten by Aron Winthrop and Silas’s weaving business is going well. Life seems perfect for everyone, until secrets are told and bodies are found. The decision has to be made between love and money. The story of *Silas Marner* portrays strongly the view of a father’s love for his child, and how their love would see their child through thick and thin.

As George Eliot wrote this novel in the Victoria era, it was less likely that people would take her work seriously. To make sure she did, she changed her name from Mary Ann Evans to a male’s name as in this era, male author’s seemed to be more successful. In the Victorian era, it was said that a woman’s career was marriage. Even though George Eliot was married, she broke the values of the Victorian time, and pursued a career in which in that time only men were seen best at, a author. Silas and Eppie’s relationship begins to blossom from the very beginning.

From the moment Silas laid eyes on the young baby, at the time unnamed, he began to nurture and care for her. Even though a part of him may have

been downhearted that what appeared to be his gold wasn't, he did not turn her away. After Silas learns that the young baby, who he named Eppie after his dead mother, has been left to fend for herself after her mother had sadly passed on, he knew he had something which will complete his life.

He shows the part of being a good and protective father immediately by '... and almost unconsciously uttered sounds of hushing tenderness'. George Eliot tells of how Eppie feels comfortable around Silas by describing that '... like a new-hatched gosling beginning to find itself comfortable... ' Even though Silas may have had the risk of losing the young baby, the kind and thoughtful character showed through him when he called for the doctor to attend for Eppie's sadly deceased mother.

By doing this, questions arise about the young baby; especially from Godfrey Cass as we know that he is actually Eppie's father. It's a lone thing- and I'm a long thing'. This single sentence on its own expresses the one and only reason why Silas feels he needs to keep her. He has been a lonesome man for most of his life, and now he has this unexpected little girl who's walked into his life, he isn't going to let her out of it as easily. ' No, no- I can't part with it, I can't let it go' shows that Silas is finally found something who will grow and love him back, unlike his gold which did not return affection.

As the year's go on, George Eliot has continued to show the affection Silas feels for Eppie and gradually, Eppie's love for him. George shows the love growing between the two of them through the use of pathetic fallacy. When Eppie is playing in Silas's workhouse, the weather is warm and sunny

showing warmth and love being created. You can tell this as previously in the story, when Dunstan stole Silas's money, the weather was raining and miserable, indicating something bad was happening.

This also reflects Eliot's romantic tendencies as she uses natural images to reflect her characters and their emotions. When Eppie is older, and has learnt of how Silas is not her biological father, she still accepts him as if he was. Silas has continued to show his love for her with sayings such as " If you hadn't have been sent to save me, I should ha'gone to the grave in my misery". This would make Eppie feel the sense of love even though she isn't naturally his, and maybe the feeling of a hero as Silas may have not been there now if she hadn't of walked into his life.

A powerful part of the story is when Godfrey tries to claim Eppie after 16 years of knowing she was his, which results in emotions being shown from Godfrey but mostly Silas. '... I'stead o' coming to take her from me now, when you might as well take the heart our o'my body? " This shows that Silas's love has grown strongly for Eppie over the last 16 years of their life and that she has basically became his heart and life, and that he wouldn't like her to be taken out of his life.

It's me she's been calling her father ever since she could say the word", meaning that even though they are not naturally related and at first felt upset, a sense of anger is coming through his words showing that he feels annoyed that Godfrey had let his love grow for Eppie and is now putting her into a difficult position of to who to choose between. From making this

decision, Godfrey (seeing as he is from a higher class) was offering Eppie a life of money and all the things she could ever desire. But even though he could buy her these things, in some ways he could never buy her love.

He had 16 years to come forward and tell of how she is his daughter, but didn't as he was thinking of his future with Nancy, which shows he has no morals. On the other hand, Silas comes from a lower class and earns minimal money. Even though this was how it had been for most of his life there in Raveloe, he didn't turn his back on Eppie when she walked into his life. He showed love and care for her as they were both 'lone things', in which he showed her love as a father had never done. This shows that even though Godfrey comes from a higher class, he hasn't got morality as much as Silas has.

Silas makes the most of what he has in his life, and doesn't let anything stop him from loving the one thing that has loved him back for once in his life. As George Eliot tells us, Godfrey never told Nancy, his lifelong love, about his secret marriage and as a result, a daughter. When he finds out about Eppie arriving and being taken in by Silas, he tries to secretly care for her. "Poor little thing! Let me give something towards finding it clothes". By doing this, he is showing that he is caring for his unrevealed daughter, but without making it too obvious.

You get the sense that Godfrey is a selfish character by not telling that Eppie is actually his daughter, just to save the chance of being with Nancy. But then eventually, you feel sympathy towards him as his new wife finds out

she can't have children. He shows the sense of love in two ways: one to his wife Nancy, risking everything by revealing his past secret just to see her be a mother. And two that he finally wants to look after Eppie, but then a sense of guilt is sent to Silas. Quoted by Godfrey " I wish to do the upmost in my power for you for the rest of my life, and provide for you as my only child".

Godfrey shows that he has now realised that he wants to look after Eppie and that he is ready to love her. This in some ways is selfish as she has grown up with a father figure, Silas, and Godfrey is now putting her on the spot to choose between love and money. You can understand why he is doing it for many reasons. One of which is for his beloved wife Nancy, but it isn't fair on Silas to do this as he has grown a strong bond with the young girl, and Godfrey shouldn't have the right to choose when he wants be a father and when he doesn't.

A child more than all other gift that earth can offer to a declining man Brings hope with it, and forward looking thoughts". After analysing the father and child relationships, I agree with this quote as Silas Marner shows how a small thing can change one person's life. No matter how that person happened to walk into their life, they can defiantly improve life and change it. The quote tells of how you should never left a young child go, as love grows over time, and for doing a good deed in the past, it shall bring hope and forward looking thoughts, resulting in an happier future.