

Character analysis: overview

[Literature](#), [Character](#)



In the story “ A Rose for Emily”, William Faulkner uses characterization to reveal the character of Miss Emily. Her character is portrayed through physical description, her actions, feelings and words, and through the narrator's remarks about Emily’s nature, and through the actions, words, and feelings, of the other characters. In " A Rose for Emily", William Faulkner creates a story about a woman who loses her sense of reality after her father died and losing everything they ever owned, and then falling for a man who was not true to her.

This paper discusses the character of Emily and how she suffers from mental instability. Miss Emily Grierson, the main character, lives for many years as a hermit, a person who lives, to some degree, in seclusion from society. " No visitor had passed since she ceased giving china-painting lessons eight or ten years earlier" (Faulkner 30). Faulkner shows Miss Emily's attempt to remove herself from interaction with society through her actions. " After her father's death she went out very little; after her sweetheart went away, people hardly saw her at all" (31).

The death of her father and the torn relationship with her true love contributed to her living in seclusion. The town played a part in Miss Emily’s insanity. There were several complaints of a foul smell coming from her house A member of the Board of Aldermen suggested Miss Emily be told to clean up her property. “ Dammit sir”, Judge Stevens said, “ will you accuse a lady to her face of smelling bad” (31). The druggist also allows her to purchase arsenic without verifying what she planned to do with the arsenic. By law, Miss Emily was supposed to advise the druggist what her intentions with the arsenic were. She did not.

Miss Emily's father was mainly responsible for her becoming a hermit and her pride also played a role of her living in seclusion. " None of the young men were quite good enough for Miss Emily and such" (32). Faulkner uses the feelings of the other characters to show Miss Emily's pride. Her pride has kept her from interacting with members of the community thus reinforcing her seclusion. However, Miss Emily's father is still responsible for her being a hermit. " We remembered all the young men her father had driven away" (32). If he had not run away the men who wanted to court with Miss Emily, she may have not gone insane.

Miss Emily may have wanted to be alone, but her heart longed for a companion. Her yearning for true love and having a companion drove her to kill Homer Baron. She knew just what she planned to do when she purchased the arsenic poison. " Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head" (35). Her most deep feelings and longing for a companion were lying in her bed. Miss Emily's pride resulted in the shocking murder of Homer Baron. Miss Emily's life was completely destroyed by her father's overprotective ways and love.

The unbearable years of torture is what made Miss Emily possessive, lonely and overly dependent. As a conclusion, Miss Emily has inner conflict with society that eventually led to her insanity. If she were exposed to the modern society, she would not have missed out on having friends both male and female, being a normal woman, and having the ability to be a happy person.

Works Cited

1. Faulkner, William. " A Rose for Emily. " Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama and Writing. 11th ed. Eds. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. New York: Pearson-Longman 2010. 30-35. Print