

A white heron by
sarah jewett |
analysis



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"A White Heron" is a classic short story written by Sarah Jewett. A White Heron contains nature elements as well as a portrayal of beauty and innocence. Sylvia is a nine-year-old girl who is living with her grandmother, whose name is Mrs. Tilley, at the New England Countryside. She used to live in a crowded manufacturer in town with her mom for eight years. Ever since Sylvia came to live with her grandmother, her love for nature has grown. Sylvia is an adventurous, silly little girl, more alive, and compassionate. She had to make a decision, whether she would fulfill her family's needs or her love for nature.

One warm day in June, the story started in the woods with a nine-year-old little girl playing hide and seek with her cow. Then came a young man who is a hunter who hunts birds for a living. When Sylvia brought him to her grandmother's house, this is where we learn more about what the hunter does to the birds for a living. According to the hunter, he said, "Oh, no, they're stuffed and preserved, dozens and dozens of them." (Jewett 437) In this quote, I thought he hunted birds to help feed the families, not for him to preserve them like they are his trophies. After Sylvia found out what he does, this upset her because she could not understand why he would do something like that to the birds. But she begins to have feelings for him, "She has never seen anybody so charming and delightful; the woman's heart, asleep in the child, was vaguely thrilled by a dream of love." (Jewett 438) Sarah created this image, to where Sylvia was a little girl, and she became a young woman who had desires and feelings for a man. At this point, I feel like she was willing to help him find the bird because she wasn't thinking about her feelings for nature. Also, the hunter had offered anyone ten dollars

if they found the bird he wanted. Sylvia decided that it was a great deal, since she could use the money to help support her grandmother and herself.

The next day, her grandmother and the hunter were sleeping. Sylvia decided to go outside to an area that she knows the most. She went to the forest where there was a Pine tree that stood the highest of all trees. The pine tree has its own story, Sylvia knew that there were men who have tried to climb, but it failed. Sylvia knew of the pine tree's legend, so she decided to take a risk. " Alas. if the great wave of human interest which flooded for the first time this dull little life should sweep away the satisfactions of existences heart to hear with the nature and the dumb life of the forest!"(Jewett 438-439) After reading those lines, this tells me that she is reconnecting to nature by enjoying the thrills of climbing and enjoying nature. I feel like her bravery of climbing the tree has brought back her time that she used to spend time in nature before meeting the hunter. As she began to climb the tree, she started to notice every little detail each time she climbed. She can see the water glowing as the sun is rising; she can hear the bird's singing as she continues to go up. Sylvia feels like she is a part of nature because she's experiencing things that she had never felt before, Sylvia has seen the real beauty of nature. She saw a white Heron flying to the nest, and she watched them and knew their secrets. As she climbed back down, she had to make this decision to decide whether she should tell the hunter because she wanted the money or would she keep the Heron's secret safe.

As the story ended with her final answer, she chose to keep Heron's secret safe. Although she was a little disappointed that she would not get the money she needed to support her grandmother and herself. All because of

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not giving the Hunter the Heron's location. The story contains several symbolisms: innocence, purity of life, the hunter. I chose innocence, as a symbolism, because I feel like Syliva was innocent before she met the hunter. She used to be this very adventurous little girl, and when the hunter came, she started to develop feelings for him. Also, when Syliva saw the white Heron, she knew that it was innocent, she could not bear the thought of something precious would be killed. So she kept the location of the Heron safe from the hunter. The next symbolism is the purity of life. I chose this because the title is named " A White Heron," the color white, which means pure. Almost like in marriage, most brides would wear a white dress to symbolize their love is pure for their groom. Since the white Heron lives in a rural area, it was a symbol that country life was pure for them as well as for Syliva. I noticed that there were no male presents in the story before the hunter showed up. So I chose hunter as a symbolism because I feel like these female characters were enjoying their peaceful life in a rural area. Ever since the hunter showed up, I believe they interrupted because I believe that they did not have to worry about money, until the hunter had offered them ten dollars to find the Heron. Some themes are displayed throughout the story, but they all revolve around one thing love vs. nature. Ever since Syliva had a feeling for the Hunter, I felt like she wanted to do anything to make him and her grandmother happy, even if it means to give the location of the Heron away. But she did not give the place away; she kept it a secret because her love for nature was greater. I feel like she chose nature over love for the hunter because she knows that nature is still the same, even after a million years compared to the love she has for the hunter. I think somehow she knew that the hunter would not love her the way she does,

and she can be replaced easily. I would have to say the tone of this story is sad because Syliva had to face the ultimate question, as the result, she does not know if she made the right decision.

I believe that this story is a third-person view because we, as a reader, are seeing everything through Syliva's perspective. Also, there was no " I or you" mentioned in the story. After reading the " A White Heron " by Sarah Jewett, Sarah did a great job making this story as if I was part of Syliva's experiences in a rural area. I think the whole reason why Sarah Jewett wrote this story was to tell the reader about the special bond between the girl and nature. Even Though she lives in the city, she still knows the feeling of being in a rural area. " As a small child, she accompanied him on his horse-and-buggy rounds, meeting the rural people who would later populate her fiction." (Jewett 433) This action had led her to be inspired to write stories about people and nature, like " A White Heron." However, I think many ideas inspire her. For example, she wanted that romantic element to the story because she wanted that typical girl crush scenario to make the girl decide who gets a happy ending. At last, she wrote this story because I feel like she wanted to promote more rights to women, and in most of her story, most of the main character is a female.

Sarah Jewett created the best nature theme story, " A White Heron." In this story, there is a special bond between the girl and nature, and this girl is nine-year-old, whose name is Syliva. She lived with her grandmother in New England Countryside, where she learned how to appreciate life and beauty. But she had to make a choice, her family's needs or love for nature.

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