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Living in a brand new world can turn out less pleasant than one could have expected, leading to the gloomy jail of anti-utopia. Telling the story of Offred's miserable life and frightening liberation, this dark anti-utopia gives plenty of food for thoughts. Because of the aggressive environment and the oppressive atmosphere that Offred was growing up in, and the fact that she did not even have the real name, - there will always be a speck of doubt inside her, no matter how much time passes or what world she would run away to. Once a miserable character that could not think of disobeying the orders of the Commander, Offred overcame the influence of her husband and the society; however, this journey has been long and complicated. It is amazing to watch Offred's personality developing with every page turn; starting from the faceless creature that she has been turned into by her husband and the society, she finally starts searching for her true self - but her attempts are far too weak to turn into a revolt.

Even tasting the freedom, she still cannot overcome the feeling of strain within. This is how Offred responded to her freedom: " Moira was like an elevator with open sides. She made us dizzy" (45). Liberty made Offred feel uncertain. Indeed, the Offred that the reader sees in the first chapter does not look like a fighter at all. Considering the role that she played in the Gilead society from the very beginning, one can claim that this was an intimidated and forsaken woman, just like the rest of the girls left with their serving to those beholding the power. That is what Offred was at the beginning of her journey - one of the " girls, felt-skirted as I knew from pictures, later in mini skirts, then pants, then one earring, spiky green-streaked hair" (3).

Does Offred change? There is no doubt about it. Like a caterpillar that is to become a butterfly, the woman changed from within; she does not have the name yet, but this is no longer an Offred we used to know - this is a personality changed unrecognizably. However, she still remains the slave of those beholding the power, and there is hardly anything that Offred can do about it. " I have failed once again to fulfill the expectations of others, which have become my own" (Atwood 73) - these simple words filled with regret and shame, show that Offred still remains a slave from within. It is clear from the very beginning that her identity has not been wiped off - Offred still asks herself the questions that help her define her role in the society and find her real identity, her own self.

Compared to the helpless subject of the male kingdom, the Offred, changed, looks much more decisive and determined: " There is more than one kind of freedom... Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from.

Don't underrate it" (24). One of the most important moments in the novel, this small dialogue reveals the essence of Offred; the woman is not certain whether she wants to be free - in fact, she is not certain of herself at all. Her personality, hurt and crashed, is aching too much to be ever healed. As Commander orders her to dress in Serena Joy's clothes, she still follows his orders, and there is not a single feeling stirred in her heart. Despite her peculiar and authentic thinking, Offred's desire to get rid of her humiliating shackles is not strong enough - the woman lingers, she is still hesitant. Not knowing what she wants, Offred is not ready to gain the freedom she longs to - and even brought to another place where she would be given all her
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rights, she will never shake off her bondage. That is the cost of living the life of a slave.

Works Cited

Atwood, Margaret.

The Handmaid's Tale. New York City, NY: Anchor, 1996. Print.