

The woman that try to be good from edna ferber

Literature



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The Woman That Try to Be Good This is a short story about a woman who was shunned by the whole town due to her past. This essay is going to explore in detail her character and expose the real reason she was being shunned by both men and women. The main character Blanche Devine is portrayed as a strong willed woman whom despite of the town people treating her like they would an animal or a person with leprosy, she still remained in the town and even bought herself a cottage as a way to emphasize her stay and present in that place (Ferber 16).

Unlike the women of her era whose role was basically to be housewives and take care of the children while the men were the workers and hence always the ones with money, Blanche had her own money (which she is said to have been spending lavishly in the stores of the town even with the elevated prices just to discourage her to purchase) and she also performed the housewife duties. She was a hardworking woman (though this hard work which was evident in her cleaning was more of a stress reliever for her) who kept mostly to herself and stayed in her home as she had no one to talk to as even the children were refrained from talking to her by their parents.

She can therefore be said to be both a man and a woman as she acted both roles perfectly. She is a persistent and a patient woman and these virtues are what make her remain in that town despite the open hatred from its people towards her for a "crime" which they all think she did but no one had the full story and hence were just being judgmental for nothing instead of being morally supportive as she lost her only child and even her man.

The tone used in the story is that of compassion as the picture of Blanche is painted to the readers. The reader turns and pours his or her heart out to the main character based on the treatment she is receiving from the rest of the

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people who are supposed to be her neighbors and hence sympathetic and friendly and not judgmental and snobbish. Her character is a symbol of power and independence women which women at that era lacked and hence was threatening and intimidating to both men and women.

The other symbolic thing with this character Blanche is her “ stubbornness” as she refuses to leave town as is expected after the way she has and continues to be treated. This attitude indicates her strong willed nature to face whatever situations she is facing head on without any fear or worry (though the writer wants us to believe that she never used to be this way but transformed later). Her transformation is also symbolic and indicates that people can change and society should accept and support these changes if they are positive.

Society is always judgmental even when those seen and known to be “ bad” try to change for the better instead of being supportive of them. The story also indicates how a threat to one’s ego can result to a lack of compassion. This is evident when the men’s and women’s ego are threatened by Blanche and their reaction is to try and kick her out of town. The setting (both the time and place) tries to make the reader unveil the real reason the people of that town hated Blanche. Her success, independence and money (all which were characteristics for men and not women) fuel the hatred. The only people who are not threatened are the Alderman and the mayor (both of whom have the power and money same as her).

Work Cited

Ferber, Edna. *The Woman Who Tried to be Good and Other Stories*. Tennessee: Lightning Source Incorporated, 2004. Print.