

The creature



The Creature is a short story written by Edna O'Brien who is an Irish author. To me this story was a bit difficult to both understand and read, this mainly because of the language and complicity of the story itself. I had to read it through almost three times to even understand the whole story .

Therefore it is a bit hard for me to pinpoint the main message in the story but if I would give it a good guess I would say that it is a psychological story about betrayal, hope and despair. But first if all I am going to fresh up your memory with a short summary of the plot. The story is narrated by a young woman who has come to a village in western Ireland as a substitute teacher.

In the village there is an old woman whose story is well known in the community. Evidently because of her poverty and the series of losses that have plagued her throughout life, she is called “ The Creature,”. Which I guess suggests a less than human status.

The neighbors know that the old woman is utterly alone, but seems to pay no attention to her. Perhaps the local people believe that God must have cursed her, because “ you sow what you reap.” The narrator is fascinated with this widow whom everyone calls the Creature and she seeks to befriend the woman. During visits to the Creature's house, the narrator, hears the tales of the woman's meager, sorrow-filled life and eventually becomes a regular visitor at the Creature's hut. She learns that the Creature is a widow who has two children: a daughter who lives in Canada and a married son who lives a few miles away on a farm.

Her husband had been shoot to death just two years after their marriage and thus she had to raise the children alone. The farm her son lived on, which originally was the Creature's farm, used to be relatively prosperous. But unfortunately all the animals developed hoof-and-mouth disease and all died. Nonetheless, she managed to keep body and soul together and managed to send the children away to school.

Her son returned from the city after marrying a woman who despised The Creature. He and his wife moved in with The Creature, but the young couple argued every night about money and the mothers presence, so The Creature signed the farm over to her son and moved away. That was 17 years ago; he had never visited her since. The narrator goes to the farm, meets the son (who by this time a passive and depressed middle aged man), and arranges for him to visit his mother.

He does this, but the visit goes poorly. The narrator finally realizes that she has actually removed the last little glimmer of hope the old woman had; before seeing her son again, she could always hope that someday the two would be reunited, but after he visits, she realizes that he doesnt care about her and will probably never come back. The embers of love in the son's heart seem to be cold and dead. If you believe that human beings are naturally kind and good at heart, this is a hard story to take, especially since it rings so true to experience.

Nonetheless it's probably a hard story for everyone to read due to its complicity. But if you have a Saturday to spare some time, some day in your

life you may read it through again but I??™ m not going to get my hopes up.
Because it??™s actually a bit boring and feels like a waste of time.