

# Eveline by james joyce

Business



The desire to escape from the boredom and hardship of life can be a tantalizing dream which disregards common sense and practicality. Life at home lacks the luster and glamor of adventures in exotic locales with new companions. But sometimes, the responsibilities and duties set in place by society and one's peers are too important to abandon for reckless self-interest. This is true in "Eveline" by James Joyce where the lure of life with Frank abroad is countered by her responsibilities to her family and by the conventions of her day, thus making her choose what probably was best for herself and her kin. Eveline's painful childhood forces her to grow up quickly and makes her yearn for change. It is evident from the extensive use of the word "dust" that Eveline believes that her current life is gloomy and repressive.

She is burdened with heavy responsibilities from an early age in a childhood where she has had to deal with periodic abuse from her father and his extreme laziness. Due to his perpetual state of ineptitude, Eveline has been forced to work to earn a meager salary for daily necessities. She has also witnessed her beloved mother die after struggling through a life of constant toil and depression. Eveline yearns to escape from what her mother had uttered upon death: "' Derevaun Seraun!". This Gaelic phrase (the end of suffering is pain) defined the life of the mother who sacrificed everything for her family and this trend seems to continue for her progeny. Eveline gives her salary to her ungrateful father, takes care of two young children and does the vast majority of the housework.

She is the pillar on which the entire household stands and this pressure causes her to lose the innocence and pleasure of adolescence. The death of

happy occasions in her life is palpable when she can recount only two instances when her father was kind and benevolent towards her. Thus, when the arrival of Frank opens up a new life for this simple and hardworking girl, she is more than tempted to seize this opportunity. Eveline allows herself to be enchanted by the allure of a life away from the hardships of home, without truly knowing what awaits her in this uncertain future. To her, Frank is a panacea for all the troubles and hardships at home, a man who can transport her away from the drabness and difficulty of Dublin to the adventures of Buenos Aires.

She becomes disillusioned by the classic concept of the "knight in shining armor" who is out to rescue the damsel in "distress". In truth, Eveline knows very little about the true nature of her new companion. Eveline describes Frank as "kind, manly and open hearted". She recalls lovingly how he courted her with exotic tales of his adventures overseas and how she felt thrillingly confused in his presence. It is very important to note that Eveline has only praise for her love and this is based only on her perceptions of his honesty and good intentions.

There is no concrete evidence which proves the veracity of all that the young man declares. The reader only had the word of a naive girl who falls in love for the very first time after 19 years of suffering and hardship. There is no mention of the financial situation of Frank who does not expound upon his situation after having "fallen on his feet". The mystery surrounding Frank seems to be too great a risk for Eveline to follow him blindly while leaving everything behind. Eveline faces a life-changing decision of whether to abandon her family for her own good or whether to sacrifice a new way of

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life. Though Eveline finds her life to be monotonous and stressful, she cannot help but remember memories of good times along with the responsibilities she has.

She had made a promise to her dying mother to take care of her dysfunctional family and she is responsible for the wellbeing of two young children. She is forced to confront these duties in order to make this decision. She faces the prospect of abandoning an old man who refuses to do work with two children. This would essentially condemn the children to the same fate suffered by Eveline after her mother's death. Leaving without warning would also bring shame to the family and leave her brother helpless to feed the family.

The realities of life catch up to Eveline who realizes that a foray into the unknown with Frank will destroy all that is familiar to her. She is shackled to her present