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Mrs. Graning

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Will Traynor Character Analysis

In the Jojo Moyes novel *Me Before You*, Louisa Clark and Will Traynor form an unbelievable connection and relationship. Louisa Clark is an odd, fun, and imaginative young girl who doesn't have much desire to succeed in life. She lives with her family in a small English town. She also has a boyfriend, Peter, who works as a personal trainer. Will Traynor, a very powerful, wealthy individual, had an exciting life until an accident left him paralyzed. This significant change in his life and disability made him depressed. Louisa is hired to be Will's caretaker and eventually, they become close. Louisa and Peter start to drift apart because of Louisa's relationship with Will. A once outgoing, strong-willed person, Will Traynor became moody and bitter after his accident, which resulted in him wanting to end his life even though he fell in love with Lou.

In the beginning of the novel Will is suffering from a tragic motorcycle accident that made him a quadriplegic. His disability and health problems require caregivers to help him with daily duties. As Mrs. Traynor hires Louisa, she says, "there's a folder here that tells you pretty much everything you need to know about Will's routines, and all his emergency numbers. I'd advise you to read it, if you get a spare moment" (Moyes 33). A once independent man is now at the mercy of other people. Will had an exciting life before his accident. He was a successful business man with a passion for adventure and travel. He had enthusiasm for extreme sports and

travel, in which the novel describes his enjoyment of activities such as skiing and motorcycle riding as well as his successful career that allowed him to travel extensively. Will stated, “I loved my life, Clark. Really loved it. I loved my job, my travels, the things I was. I loved being a physical person. I liked riding my motorbike, hurling myself off great heights. I liked crushing people in business deals” (Moyes 325). Will’s current physical condition plays a huge role on his personality as well as his character development throughout the novel.

Throughout the novel, Will’s character transforms from the depressed, angry individual to the more outgoing and adventurous man he once was. When Will Traynor was first introduced into the story, he was angry, emotional, and unhappy enough to no longer want to live. Will wants to participate in assisted suicide and wants his parents to support him. Will shows this same attitude when he said, “I don’t do anything, Mrs. Clark. I can’t do anything anymore. I sit. I just about exist.” (Moyes 39). When a person’s whole world is turned upside down, he feels there is nothing more he can give. Due to his paralysis, Will feels his life is no longer worth living because he cannot do the adventurous activities he once did. Also, he has health problems and discomforts that make him miserable. Over time, Louisa encourages Will to participate in activities that make him happy and convinces him that he does have a life despite his disabilities. The more positive influences that were shared, the more Will began to believe and have hope.

The relationship between Will and Louisa is the focus of the novel, and a crucial role in his character development. When Louisa first met Will, he was sarcastic and demeaning towards her. Louisa said, “but oh Lord, he was vile to me. Everything I said, he had a sharp answer for. If I asked him if he was warm enough, he would retort that he was quite capable of letting me know if he needed another blanket” (Moyes 45). Will was so hurt and angry about his situation that he let it all out on Lou and anyone else.

Eventually, Lou's persistence and genuine care breaks down his barriers and brings joy back into his life. She strived to engage Will in activities that he once enjoyed and encouraged him to embrace his new life with paralysis. Eventually, Will begins to appreciate the small, meaningful experiences he can still have. Will states, "and believe me, Clark, my whole life has changed for the better since you came" (Moyes 324). By the end of the novel, Will becomes more vulnerable and shows growth from the once angry, resentful man. However, it was not enough to change his mind.

Although Louisa made an impact on Will Traynor's life and made him see the potential he had despite his paralysis, it was not a life he wanted to live. With her persistence and caring personality, Will evolves from a bitter, moody individual to a more enjoyable person to be around. He realized there was a life to live regardless of his limitations. Ultimately, Will missed the physical life he once lived and followed through with the assisted suicide.

Works Cited

Dimauro, Zoey. *Me before you-thanasia*. The Arlington Catholic Herald. 23 August 2024.

Moyes, Jojo. *Me Before You*. Penguin Books, 2012.