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English 11

26 August 2024

Me Before You

The book *Me Before You*, written by Jojo Moyes, is a romance novel. A twenty-six-year-old girl, Louisa Clark lost her job of six years and faces complications trying to find a new one. The job she accepts, as a caregiver, ends up giving her a different perspective on life. Her background changes her as a person and she experiences change throughout the book. Louisa Clark as the protagonist of *Me Before You* evolves through childhood trauma, struggles with her family's financial needs and falls in love with Will Traynor, who suffers with being a quadriplegic.

Louisa Clark evolves through her childhood trauma. She was sexually assaulted as a young adult. Will, her new employer, makes her find her way through a maze and she starts getting flashbacks from the night of her assault. It states, "But then I heard their voices, the catcalling, the mocking laughter. I saw them, darting in and out of the gaps in the hedge, felt my own feet sway drunkenly in my high heels, the unforgiving prickle of the hedge as I fell against it, trying to steady myself." (Moyes 243). The first time her assault is mentioned was described like her flashback, saying she was drunk and could not steady herself. Additionally, the assault changes her personality. Louisa explains how she was before the trauma, "I dressed normally, in those days. Or, I should say I dressed like the other girls in town—long hair, flicked over the shoulder, indigo jeans, T-shirts tight enough to show off our tiny waists and high breasts."

(Moyes 154). Hearing the way she dressed to impress men versus how she now dresses for herself proves how much it affected her. Louisa changes into a person with a bubbly personality and dresses in a unique way so men are not attracted to her. The assault is a major event that has an effect on her character, but not the only factor.

Louisa's family struggles with their financial needs. They rely on Louisa to make enough money to support their family. "They relied on my wages. Treena earned next to nothing at the flower shop. Mum couldn't work, as she had to look after Grandad, and Grandad's pension amounted to almost nothing. Dad lived in a constant state of anxiety about his job at the furniture factory." (Moyes 10). No one in her family has a steady job that can meet their needs, besides her. However, Louisa loses her job of six years at a cafe, the Buttered Bun. Losing this job has her family, especially her dad, worrying about their financial needs. Louisa's dad, Bernard Clark, emphasizes this by saying "What the hell is she supposed to do now? He could have given her more than a day's bloody notice." (Moyes 9). The owner had to go back to Australia and had to shut the cafe down, so her dad is furious because he thinks she will not be able to find another job. Equally important, Louisa's sister, Treenna, wants to go back to college. After attempting to quit her job as Will's caregiver, Treenna confronts her and acts selfish. Louisa reacts to Treenna by saying, "We've all got to stick at jobs we hate just so that little Katrina can fulfill her bloody ambitions." (Moyes 122). Louisa is being sarcastic when she says this because Treenna has to have money from someone for the tuition at college, so she makes it about her trying to convince Louisa not to quit her job. Since Louisa is making a decent wage by working for Will, their financial situation is not a problem anymore. Treenna ends up going to college and her dad takes another job offer. Louisa does not quit the job because she makes good money, but she comes to the realization that she cares for Will more than she thinks.

Louisa is a caregiver for Will Traynor, who she ends up falling in love with. Will was in a terrible motorcycle accident and is now a quadriplegic. Falling in love with Will affects her relationship with her boyfriend of six years, Patrick. Patrick starts to get jealous when Louisa is showing more attention to Will than him. They get into an argument and Patrick states, “Nearly seven years we’ve been together. And you’ve known this man, had this job, for five months. Five months. If you go with him now, you’re telling me something about our relationship. About how you feel about us.” (Moyes 287). Patrick was not enthused that she threw their seven-year relationship away for a man she has known for five months. Furthermore, Will makes Louisa come out of her comfort zone and become more adventurous. They get tattoos together as it states, “Two hours later we exited the tattoo parlor, me eighty pounds lighter and bearing a surgical patch over my hip where the ink was still drying.” (Moyes 213). Louisa gets a tattoo of a bee on her hip all because Will did it with her. Consequently, Louisa ends up getting her heart broken. She takes Will on a trip to Mauritius, to show Will that life is worth living and during the trip she confesses her love to him, but he still decided go to Switzerland for assisted suicide. Louisa confesses her love by saying, “You make me happy, even when you’re awful. I would rather be with you—even the you that you seem to think is diminished—than with anyone else in the world.” (Moyes 324). Louisa falls for Will hoping it will change his mind about Switzerland and that it will work even though he can not reach the desires he wants to. Will ends up going to Switzerland and Louisa goes with him. Mrs. Traynor calls Louisa, “He’s still alive. She asked me—begged me—to come to Switzerland. And she’s booked me onto the last flight out this evening.” (Moyes 348). Will truly cares for Louisa and wants her there so he can say goodbye. Their bond is true and Louisa supports his decision even though it is not what she wants.

The protagonist, Louisa Clark, struggles with her past, financial needs, and falling in love with a quadriplegic. Louisa does not let her family's poor finances get in her way. Louisa is not just Will's caregiver, but a true friend. She is sweet, bubbly, different and is willing to do anything for Will. Not all things go her way in the end, but she accepts Will's decision after trying to change his mind for months.