

Tralyn Cusic

Mrs. Graning

English 11

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Me Before You

In the annex of the castle, located in south Wales, is where the main character of the book *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes lives. Will Traynor does not live in the annex by choice but by fate. He was a wealthy business person who once lived an extravagant lifestyle that involved women, money, adventures, and freedom. The adjectives that were used to describe his lifestyle were the reasons he could not accept his fate. Will Traynor becomes quadriplegic when he is struck by a motorcycle while trying to catch a cab and, since this event, he went from the big lifestyle that was described previously to being wheelchair bound, depressed, and suicidal, but, when he met his caregiver Lou, he changed because she convinced him to try things he had not done since his injury, and it made him happy for a while.

The character of Will Traynor has a lot of different characteristics considering he has basically lived two lives. Before his accident, he was described as an adventurous person. On page 193, Will says, “I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro when I hit thirty. That was pretty incredible,” (Moyes). This displays how adventurous Will was before he was injured in the accident. On the other hand, Will was also regarded as a businessman. On page 179, as Will is explaining his job prior to the accident, Lou thinks to herself that Will’s job sounded pretty important even if he played it down (Moyes). These two characteristics are some of the reasons why Will could not accept his fate. He could not understand how he could go from such a free and adventurous life

to a very limited and dull life. As a result of his accident, Will often reminisced and thought about his previous life and wondered why everything went wrong.

On March 19th, 2007, while Will Traynor was trying to flag down a cab on a rainy day, he was struck by a motorcycle. Will had to be assisted in nearly everything after the accident because he could not move anything but his neck. This took a huge toll on him because he was nowhere near the man he used to be. On page 166, Will says “I don’t want to go in just yet. I just want to sit and not have to think about...” (Moyes). When Will said this, he had just returned from a concert with Lou and was in the driveway of the castle about to go back into the annex. He did not finish the sentence, but it is obvious that he was implying that he wanted to feel like a normal man for a moment. Eventually, Lou confesses her love for Will. Although Will really liked her, he felt as if he could not be in a relationship with her because he was not the man he wanted to be. On page 322, Will says, “I can’t do this because I can’t...” He swallowed. “I can’t be the man I want to be with you. And that means that this”-he looked up into my face- “This just becomes... another reminder of what I am.” (Moyes). In these sentences, Will confesses his love for Lou but also says he cannot be the man that she needs and that he wants to be with her. As a result, Lou and Will become very distant and hostile towards each other. This was a very selfless moment on Will’s part because, even though he loves Lou, he knows she deserves more.

Will Traynor’s attitude, personality, and perspective on life changed after March 19th, 2007. After the accident, he became a C5-6 quadriplegic, which meant he would never walk again. Will faced many difficult situations during this time which led to him being suicidal and even attempting suicide once. On page 109, Will says to his mother, “I don’t want to live like this, Mother. This is not the life I chose. There is no prospect of my recovery, hence it is a perfectly reasonable request to ask to end it in a manner I see fit.” (Moyes). Will consistently

said this to his mother, waiting for an answer. Two weeks later, after Will's attempt to take his life, she said yes under the condition that he would give her and Mr. Traynor six more months of him. As a result of this event, Will was assigned a caregiver (Lou), whose job was to make sure Will didn't try to end his life before the six-month period. Lou did not know this information, but she soon finds out when she overhears Mrs. Traynor and her daughter talking about it. On page 119, Lou says, "I overheard you. You and your daughter. Last night. And I don't want to... I don't want to be part of it" This event resulted in Louisa being determined to change Will's mind about his suicide plans and also forming a close relationship with him. Due to Lou's determination, she quickly changes Will's depressed attitude, but his plans to end his life still remain the same.

Will Traynor's character changed for the better when he met Louisa Clark. She knew Will was stubborn but tried to make the best out of their time together anyway. Lou and Will got off to a bumpy start. Will tries to test Lou when she first meets him by trying to scare her and making intimidating sounds (Moyes 31). His determination to try to drive her away almost worked, but as she settled into the job, it made her want to get to know him even more. After all, they eventually got closer, and it made Will's life a little better. When Lou threatens to quit her job as the caregiver to Will, Mrs Traynor begs her not to by saying "Will is comfortable with you. More than he's been for some time. I... it would be very hard for us to replicate that with someone else." (Moyes 119). This event really showed how much Lou had changed Will's life in the little time she knew him. However, she could not change his mind when it came down to his decision to take his life, no matter how hard she tried.

Will Traynor's life was a very meaningful thing to some people, even when he didn't realize it. He experienced life from a very high place and a very low place that most people do

not get to experience but when he was in his low place he had Lou, who was there until the end.

This story highlights love as well as the uncertainty of what someone's life can become. Will

Traynor and Louisa Clark were a great example of loving someone with no limits.

Works Cited

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

McGuire, Aubree. "Summary of "Me Before You" by Jojo Moyes." *Medium*, 6 September 2023,

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