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Mrs. Graning

English 11

26 August 2024

Will Traynor: The Quadriplegic Once Rude Turned Kind

In a large house in England, Will Traynor lives with his parents and newly hired caregiver, Louisa Clark. Jojo Moyes's *Me Before You* presents a growing love between a disabled man, Will, and his caregiver, Louisa. The two of them were once against each other but as they continue they form a deep connection. Will has a devastating secret that Louisa now knows about that nearly tears them apart. They fall in love but Will still plans to go through with his secret plan of killing himself and wants her to be there for it. Louisa instantly disagrees; however, she wants to be there for him, so she goes to support him in his tragic ending. Their love shows that no matter how bitter a person is they still deserve love and, if they are willing to, they can also give it. Will Traynor is a quadriplegic with a rich lifestyle who at the beginning of the novel is very sarcastic and disrespectful but Louisa makes him realize that being a rude person does not help anybody so he begins to enjoy life and learn to have respect for others.

One of the most important details of the novel *Me Before You* is Will being a quadriplegic. In 2007 Will is hit by a motorcycle while trying to hail a taxi. Unfortunately the accident causes him to become fully paralyzed in both legs, one arm and mostly paralyzed in his other arm but he is still able to make slight movements with it. Before the accident he is a thriving, rich business man with a beautiful yet jealous girlfriend and many good friends. His girlfriend demonstrates her jealousy with her wanting him to not have his work phone on

him when they go to dinner. (Moyes 2). The novel describes her care for him through the descriptions of how she reacts to his everyday life procedures. Nevertheless, the accident takes a huge toll on his life and affects his joy, attitude, activities, work, etc. Since he loses all his joy all of his former friends do not try to visit him anymore. Having no friends and being paralyzed results in him having no one to watch out for him or cheer him up. Consequently, his depression and self-hatred result in him attempting to kill himself while he is unsupervised as described in the conversation between his mother and his sister Georgina, “Daddy found him. Back in January. It was ... it was terrible.” (Moyes 102). Luckily his home health nurse Nathan finds him and gets him to the hospital in time. However, Will is not happy that Nathan saved his life.

The anger he feels toward Nathan shows even more how aggressive his disability makes him. Will is very unkind to everyone that comes even remotely near him. The rage that emits from his heart causes him to be unable to mentally heal. He turns to humor trying to make jokes of his disability to worry those he loves. Will demonstrates this in his actions when he first meets Lou, “His eyes met mine, and after a pause, he let out a bloodcurdling groan. Then his mouth twisted, and he let out another unearthly cry.” (Moyes 31). Even through his jokes he still becomes very depressed and closed off hardly allowing anyone to speak to him. The jokes he makes never help him with his continuous mental struggle. In the end he still takes his own life so he can die on his own terms, in his own way, with the people he loves most, specifically Louisa. Louisa is most important to him and this is demonstrated through his request, “Please. Come on. Right here, on the bed. Right next to me. (Moyes 358). Through this act he shows how much he loves Louisa as well as how much he was struggling having to live the life of being a disabled man. Although he ended his life he still learned to love and care for others especially Lou.

Louisa changes his life for the better by letting him learn that even though he has a disability he can still be loved and explore the world with those he loves most. She takes him on many trips to attempt to change his mind and although it does not work he does learn that he can be comfortable in his disability. He learns that he can be loved even though he is paralyzed. The the adventures they embark on together allow their love to flourish and become stronger as well as widening both of their horizons. (Moyes 322). The closer Will and Louisa become the more he opens up and begins to enjoy life. Her constant kindness, love and care for him shows him that it is better to be kind than be hateful. Through the experiences they explore together their love for one another grows to extreme levels. As they grow together Will falls in love with Lou showing majority of his kindness toward her. According to William Peace, “The central characters are all clearly defined, and their development is entirely credible.” The growth they experience together causes them both to be happier in their lives.

Moyes’s *Me Before You* is a classic strangers to lovers novel that describes the cause of Will Traynor’s accident that makes him a quadriplegic as well as how it changes him into a sarcastic hateful person and how Louisa transforms him into a kind, loving person. The novel describes the problems of selfhatred and acts as an example of how quickly someone’s life can change for the worst. Throughout the novel every emotion is explored: love, hatred, rage, kindness, regret, dread, etc. Every chapter of this novel opens a new door to new emotions and new experiences for Lou and Will. Louisa and Will’s love for each other proves that no matter what is happening in someone’s life they still deserve love and respect.

Work Cited

Moyes, Jojo. *Me Before You*. Penguin Publishing Group, 2013.

Peace, William. "Review: Me Before You." WilliamPeaceBlog, 03 October 2019,

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