

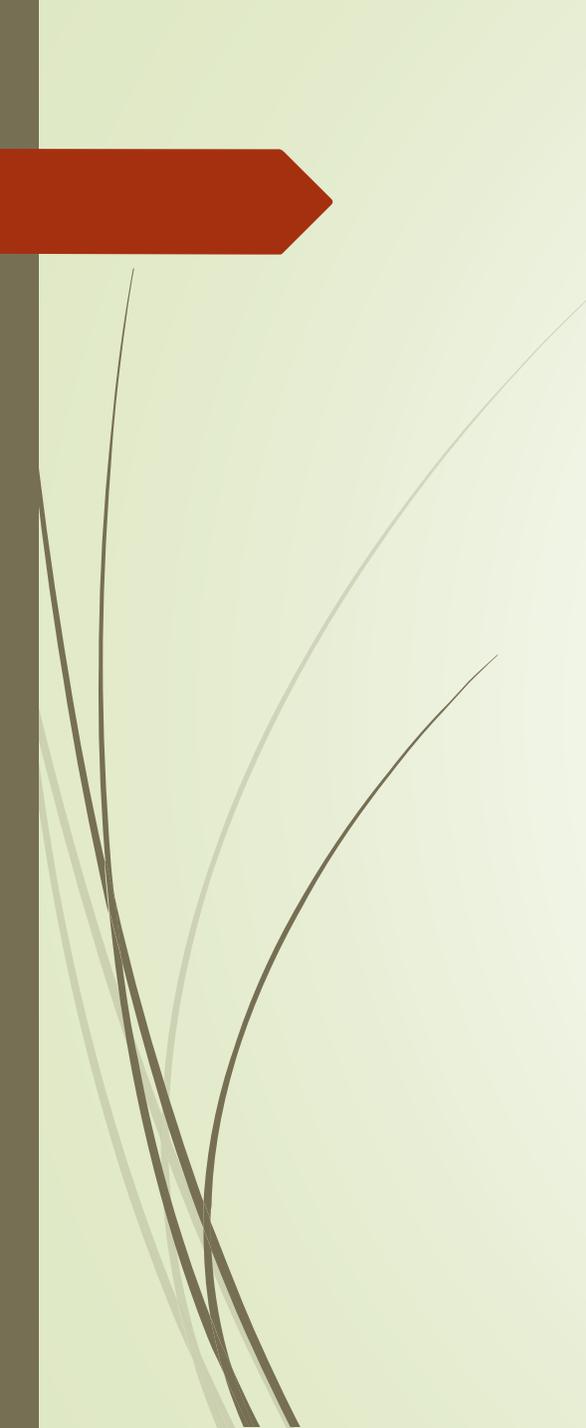


The Nightingale and Red Rose

Oscar Wilde



Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (16 October 1854 – 30 November 1900) was an Irish poet and playwright. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, the early 1890s saw him become one of the most popular playwrights in London.



About the Text-

The story “**The Nightingale and the Rose**” is written by Oscar Wilde. It was published in **1888** in a collection of children’s story named as **The Happy Prince and the Other Tales.**

Although, it is a children’s story but it deals with philosophical and emotional issues that are beyond the understanding of children. It is also enriched with the wealth of deep meaning. It is full of indirect comments on life, personifications, similes and symbolism.

Moreover, in this story Oscar Wilde raises the most common issues of materialism and idealism present in the conventional society he lived in.



While sitting in the branches of the Oak-tree, the Nightingale overhears the Student lamenting the fact that his sweetheart will not dance with him unless he brings her a red rose. The Nightingale sees in the young man a real-world example of the romance she sings about, and she thinks to herself how awe-inspiring and powerful love is. Impressed by the apparent depth of the Student's emotion, she decides to help him secure the girl's affections.

The Nightingale first flies to a White Rose-tree standing in the center of a plot of grass and asks him for a red rose. He tells her that all his roses are white, but advises her to find his brother, the Yellow Rose-tree standing next to a sun-dial. The Nightingale flies to him and is again disappointed. The Yellow Rose-tree in turn suggests that she visit his brother underneath the Student's window. This Rose-tree confirms that his roses are red, but adds that as it is wintertime, he cannot provide her with a blossom.

In despair, the Nightingale wonders aloud whether there is any way she can find a single red rose. Reluctantly, the Rose-tree tells her that her only option is to spend the night singing with one of his thorns in her heart. Her music will bring the flower into existence, and her blood will dye its petals red, but the process of impaling herself on the thorn will kill her. Although the thought of losing life's pleasures saddens the Nightingale, she concludes that the sacrifice will be worthwhile if done for love.



The Nightingale returns to the Student and attempts to tell him her plan, asking that he repay her by always being a true lover. The Student cannot understand the Nightingale's words, but the Oak-tree, saddened, asks her to sing a final song for him. She agrees, and the Student complains that her song lacks meaning and emotion before going home.

That evening, the Nightingale flies to the Rose-tree and allows the thorn to pierce her. She sings about love through the night, gradually pressing herself further onto the thorn. As she does so, a rose takes shape on the Tree, finally turning red when the thorn pierces the Nightingale's heart and kills her.

Later that day, the Student finds the red rose outside his window, but does not realize where it came from. Nevertheless, he picks it up and brings it to the girl, who is sitting outside her home spinning **silk**. The girl, though, rejects the gift, saying that she prefers the jewels she has received from a wealthy suitor. Angry, the Student throws the rose into the road and storms off, deciding that love is not worth the trouble. The story concludes with him opening a **book** and returning to his studies.

THEMES IN THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE

THEME OF SACRIFICE:

The theme of sacrifice is explored through Nightingale's self sacrifice in the name of true love and for the sake of helping others.

When the Nightingale sees the student crying for his sweetheart, her whole hearted believe in love compels her to help the boy. So she decides to help him and goes out of her house in search of a red rose. After searching for it everywhere she comes to know about a way of getting the rose. She has to give her heart's blood to a white flower and make it red. She believes that it is worth giving her life for the sake of true love.

As we know that Nightingale has an unshakeable believe in love because of which she sacrifices her life but at the end of the story nobody appreciates her sacrifice and it is wasted when the student throws the red rose in the gutter where it is destroyed.

THEME OF LOVE:

In the story “The Nightingale and the rose” is about the nature of love. In the beginning of the story, the student claims to be in love with his professor’s daughter and is crying for a red rose because he will dance with her in the balls if he will give her a red rose.

Moreover, the Nightingale sacrifices her life for the sake of love. She thinks that it is worth sacrificing her life for true love. This sacrifice shows that true love does exist but at the end no one appreciates it.

Wilde is trying to convey that true love does exist but people make it shallow and selfish. The student who thinks that he is in love does not truly know the meaning of love. When the girl rejects him and his red rose, he calls her ungrateful and says that love is silly and unpractical which shows him more as a materialistic person rather than a true lover.

MATERIALISM:

The theme of materialism is explored by the human characters. The young student, Professor's daughter and Chamberlain's nephew are materialistic in some sense.

The student who claims to be in love is not really in love rather he evokes rational side of materialism. For him a red rose is worth more than Nightingale's life and true love. When the Nightingale sings a song, he says that her voice is beautiful but shallow and lacks any emotion which shows that he is a materialistic person who is unable to feel deep emotions.

On the other hand, his love, the professor's daughter also shows materialism by rejecting the red rose. She thinks that precious jewels are more worthy than a red rose. In the end of the story the sacrifice of Nightingale goes wasted when the girl rejects the rose and the boy destroys it.

Furthermore, Chamberlain's nephew is also materialistic because he brings precious jewels for the girl to show his love for her. Love is shown as a material pursuit rather than a true emotion by these characters.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE CHARACTERS ANALYSIS

THE NIGHTINGALE:



The Nightingale is the protagonist of the story. She is romantic by nature and is inspired by student's love. She sings about love all the time and waits to see it. When she sees the student crying for a red rose, she decides to sacrifice her life to help him out. She gives her heart's blood to a white flower to colour its petals and fulfil the need of student and in this process she dies. The whole story revolves around her sacrifice and selfless nature which is not appreciated throughout the story.

At the end of the story, her sacrifice is ignored and wasted by everyone when the red rose, stained by her heart's blood, is rejected and destroyed. Her selfless nature and unshakeable believe in true love shows that true does exist but people make it selfish.

The Student-



He is a young boy with beautiful eyes and red lips who claims to be in love with a girl. In the very beginning of the story the student appears as a true lover who laments in his garden for the love of his life. He inspires the bird to sacrifice her life to help him out but as the story goes we come to know about his true nature. He is pre-occupied by practicality and lacks the ability to feel true emotions.

When the girls reject the red rose given by him, he calls her ungrateful and suddenly all his love fades away. He decides that love is unpractical and unrealistic. It shows him as a materialistic person rather than a person who believes in love and selflessness.

He does not appreciate Nightingale's sacrifice and does not fulfil her last wish that was to be true to his love.



THE ROSE TREE:

There are three rose trees in the story but only one plays a major role in it. This is the tree under student's window that helps the Nightingale in creating a red rose.

When Nightingale asks him for a way of getting a red rose, he refuses to tell her because he does not want her to lose her life. But the Nightingale performs this suicidal act by pressing her heart against one of his thorns, giving her heart's blood to the rose to dye it red.

The rose-tree is the only one in the story who recognizes her sacrifice and remains sympathetic her.



THE GIRL:

The girl is briefly introduced in the story. She expresses an important theme. She is the student's sweetheart and professor's daughter. She tells the student to bring a red rose for her if he wants to dance with her in the party. When the student brings her a bright red-rose she rejects it because she is provided with jewels by another rich suitor.

This act of selfishness shows her as a materialistic and shallow person who values wealth more than true love.



Thank You