
Minnie Cooper's Character in Short Story

Flowers reach the apex of their loveliness at the peak of spring, only to be succeeded by rapid withering in early summer. Like a blossoming, floral beauty, Minnie Cooper's youthful vibrancy shriveled into a decayed ruin once she approached adulthood. William Faulkner emphasized this central idea in "Dry September" as he characterized Minnie Cooper's dynamic life with purposeful words, powerful imagery, and meticulously-selected details. Initially, he depicted Minnie Cooper as an endearing child who captured the adulation of the townspeople. However, following her adolescent years, she became ostracized by the town for some unmentioned reason.

With his succinct diction, William Faulkner implied that Minnie Cooper possessed a fairly satisfying childhood. Although her family was not the wealthiest in town, they were economically "comfortable," capable of meeting Minnie Cooper's material needs. Unfortunately Minnie Cooper's emotional needs were far from fulfilled. As a young, "popular" girl that thrived in the social spotlight, William Faulkner's description of Minnie's adulthood highlighted her gradual deterioration. She possessed a "bright, faintly haggard manner" and a style that grew increasingly dim and haggard as she aged. As an eye-catching young lady during her early years, Minnie Cooper also flaunted her "slender nervous body and a hard vivacity," but in adulthood, she seemed less marvelous, described simply as a woman on the "slender side of ordinary."

Although Minner Cooper began her life as the town's precious sweetheart, she quickly became a ridiculed figure in adulthood. In an attempt to depict the profound results of the rumors and ostracization Minnie faced as she grew older, Faulkner utilized vivid imagery. Throughout her childhood, Minnie had surpassed other children in character and vigor, thriving as a "brighter and louder flame" in comparison with her peers. Shortly following an ambiguous conversation that Minnie overheard however, she refused to attend parties. Slowly, her face began to morph into "a mask" with the "furious repudiation of truth in her eyes" that accompanied her wherever she went, from events on the shadowy porticoes to gatherings on the summer lawns. Furthermore, Minnie Cooper constantly failed to satisfy the town's narrow standards. Upon starting a relationship with the widowed banker, she faced severe scrutiny for her actions. As she suffered from their condemnation, the townspeople's secret eyes watched her bright, haggard face" and they judged her conduct based on the smell of "whiskey on her breath."

Over time, Minnie Cooper's uncertain standing in the town only solidified, as evidenced by useful details supplied by William Faulkner. As a child, Minnie's personality allowed her to "ride on the crest of the town's social life as exemplified by the high school parties she attended and the church social period of her contemporaries." As she aged, the circumstances changed, and Minnie was the last individual to realize that she was losing ground compared to other children in her age group. As these adolescents learned and mastered the art of flirting and courting, Minnie Cooper struggled to attract a man who would "call on her steadily." Once she passed the age of marriage, she became the target of criticism for the townspeople, and when she dated the bank cashier with no intention of marriage, the townspeople accused her of adultery.

Although she may have been the town's sweetheart long ago, Minnie failed to adhere to

society's rigid restrictions by the time she reached adulthood. As a result, she faced constant condemnation for remaining single during an era when getting married equated to the fulfillment of a woman's ultimate objective in life. With the town's antiquated expectations, Minnie Cooper's unconventional relationship with the bank teller also resulted in the degradation of her social status. Overall, William Faulkner's masterful manipulation of details, imagery, and words only served to enhance the tribulations of Minnie's transition from childhood to adulthood. However, throughout the passage, Faulkner refrained from identifying the reason for Minnie's demise. The reason for her decay remained ambiguous, but perhaps the meddling weeds of society prevented Minnie from reaching full bloom.

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