
Reasons Why Emily Is Insane In “A Rose For Emily”

Jules verne once said, “Solitude and isolation are painful things and beyond human endurance.” In “A Rose for Emily,” by William Faulkner he reveals throughout the short story the unstable mind of Miss Emily Grierson. “A Rose for Emily” tells the story of a woman named Emily Grierson and her life in a nonlinear style. Faulkner talks about Emily living with her controlling father until he dies and the man she becomes falls in love with named Homer Barron until he disappears. By Faulkner writing, “A Rose for Emily,” he shows how isolation can drive a person to insanity through Emily. Her isolation and insanity came from her father and his death, the people in town, and the rejection of love from Homer Barron.

Emily was first isolated by her controlling father even though he was doing it because he loved her. Faulkner states that he “all the young men... had been driven away”(103) from her by her father. Even though her father may have isolated her out of love he kind of made himself her only social interactions. Emily became so attached to her father to where when he died she convinced herself that he “was not dead. She did that for three days”(103). She had people calling her to try and convince her to let them dispose of the body for days. After her father died she became unaware of things going on and things that had happened from never leaving her house. When Jefferson officials came to her house to try and get her to pay her taxes she replied with, “See Colonel Sartoris(103).” He was the one who told Emily that the town would not make her pay taxes as an exchange for the money her father had loaned them. However, Faulkner informs the readers that Colonel Sartoris had been deceased for ten years. After her father's death was when she started digging herself into a hole closer and closer to insanity.

After the isolation from her father she was then isolated because she lacked the cleanliness of her house and was judged by the people in town. They didn't want to be seen with a person who wasn't even able to upkeep their own house clean. The residents of Jefferson had to plan to “send her word to have her place cleaned up”(104) because of the awful smell that was coming from her home. From this one can understand that she had been isolated from Jefferson because no one wanted to associate with the lady with the smelly house in Jefferson. Emily's servant, Tobe, became her single source of conversation everyday.

Emily's road towards insanity cannot be put fully on her father or the people in town alone. The final breaking point of insanity for Emily was Homer Barron who did not feel the same way about her as she did him. Emily fell in love with Homer and saw him as a way to start interacting with some of the people in town again. The residents talked about how “Miss Emily had been to the jeweler's and ordered a man's toilet set in silver, with the letters H. B. on each piece”(106). One can conclude from this that she really liked Homer and probably dreamed of marrying him. However, she later realized her dreams were not going to happen when heard that Homer said “he liked men”(106) and consequently, she went to the druggist and bought arsenic to kill him with. At this point of the story, I saw Emily as just a cold-blooded killer but what made her go from a cold-blooded killer to insane was the fact that she slept next to Homer's decaying corpse for decades.

Faulkner shows us how easy it is for someone in total continuous isolation to go down the route towards insanity. Through his story as readers we can learn that isolation can be a harmful thing

so you should include yourself in thing in the world. You can take away a lesson to not let isolation take away your sanity.

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