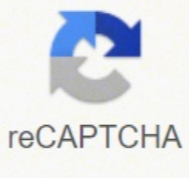




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Carson mccullers the ballad of the sad cafe sparknotes

These notes were contributed by members of the GradeSaver community. We are thankful for their contributions and encourage you to make your own. Written by Timothy Sexton, Hayae Daoudi The town where the Sad Café is located oozes with the sense of desperation. Relatively empty, spare, a few ramshackle houses, trees that sprout increasingly few peaches each year and church all situated around a main street barely the length of a football field. The biggest structure in the entire town is the home of Miss Amelia. The house has to be big; its owner is 100% female, but that can be hard to determine from a cursory glance. Like its owner, there is something rather off about the very architecture of the structure and the sense of desperation that permeates throughout the town extends to the precarious nature of the home which appears to be on the verge of a nervous breakdown, also much like its inhabitant. The grotesque that is an essential component of the work of Carson McCullers is here given symbolic form in the lack of proper symmetry to Miss Amelia and her home and is made even more manifest when hunchbacked dwarf name Lymon arrives with a photograph proving Fanny and Martha Jesup are half-sisters. Which means Miss Amelia and Lymon are cousins. Miss Amelia had married one Marvin Macy, but refuse to consummate the marriage and right from her wedding night exhibited a strange and strong preference for dressing in pants, reading the Farmer's Almanac, smoking a pipe and living apart from her husband in the downstairs part of the house. Meanwhile, Marvin's response to the immediately rejection of him was a life of crime and when Lymon shows upon the scene, he is safely tucked away inside the concrete walls of the big stony. Despite the apparent existence of blood relations between, Amelia quickly becomes infatuated with Lymon to the point where she gives in to his request to open a café. Cousin Lymon moves in with Amelia—his dwarfish appearance relieves any expectation of contractual obligation for intercourse—and the café becomes an enormous success. All of this occurs because of a tremendous change that has overcome Miss Amelia. Not only was she mannish in appearance and action, but emotion as well. She was curt, terse and rejected any outward displays suggesting softness and tenderness. Lymon seems to have changed all this and this change has no gone unnoticed by the townsfolk who gather at the café and watch in amazement as Miss Amelia's soft and tender side becomes apparent. Not long after Lymon appears on the scene, Marvin Macy is released from the penitentiary. He heads back home with plans to destroy Miss Amelia the way she destroyed him. Lymon is immediately drawn to Marvin, viewing him as the ideal real man that he is not with own bizarre appearance and feminine ways. Macy draws upon this aspect of Lymon's character to essentially win him away from Amelia, thus setting up an altercation with Miss Amelia in which Lymon plays the essential role in allowing Macy to walk away the winner. In the aftermath of the fight, Lymon and Marvin rifle through Amelia's belongings, pilfer from cafe and steal her money before disappearing. McCullers adds a coda to the conclusion of her story in the form of The Twelve Mortal Men, a story about a dozen members of a chain-gang which resonates thematically with the narrative's progression as well as the overriding sense of desolation and desperation that comes with being trapped inside a prison of one form or another. You can help us out by revising, improving and updating this section. Update this section After you claim a section you'll have 24 hours to send in a draft. An editor will review the submission and either publish your submission or provide feedback. For the film, see The Ballad of the Sad Café (film). The Ballad of the Sad Café First editionAuthorCarson McCullersCover artistR MurrayCountryUnited StatesLanguageEnglishGenreSouthern GothicPublished1951, Houghton MifflinOCLC1112597LC ClassPS3525.A1772 B3 The Ballad of the Sad Café, first published in 1951, is a book by Carson McCullers comprising a novella of the same title along with six short stories: "Wunderkind", "The Jockey", "Madame Zilensky and the King of Finland", "The Sojourner", "A Domestic Dilemma", and "A Tree, a Rock, a Cloud". The first edition of the book also included McCullers' previously published novels The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter, Reflections in a Golden Eye, and The Member of the Wedding. The American playwright Edward Albee adapted the novella as a stage play in 1963, which itself was adapted into a 1991 film of the same name starring Vanessa Redgrave and Keith Carradine. Plot of the novella "The Ballad of the Sad Cafe" opens in a small, isolated town in the Southern United States. The story introduces Miss Amelia Evans, strong in both body and mind, who is approached by a hunchbacked man with only a suitcase in hand who claims to be her kin. When Miss Amelia, whom the townspeople see as a calculating woman who never acts without reason, takes the stranger into her home, rumors begin to circulate that Miss Amelia has done so in order to take what the hunchback has in his suitcase. When the rumors hit their peak, a group of eight men come to her store, sitting outside on the steps for the day and waiting to see if something will happen. Finally, they enter the store all at once and are stunned to see that the hunchback is alive and well. With everyone gathered inside, Miss Amelia brings out some liquor and crackers, which further shocks the men, as they have never witnessed Miss Amelia be hospitable enough to allow drinking inside her home. This is the beginning of the café. Miss Amelia and the hunchback, Cousin Lymon, unintentionally create a new tradition for the town, and the people gather inside the café on Sunday evenings, often until midnight. It is apparent, though surprising, to the townspeople that Miss Amelia has fallen in love with Cousin Lymon, and has begun to change slightly. When the townspeople see this, they relate it to another odd incident in which Miss Amelia was also involved; the issue of her ten-day marriage. Miss Amelia had been married to a man named Marvin Macy, who was a vicious and cruel character before he fell in love with her. He changed his ways and became good-natured, but reverted to his old self when his love was rejected after a failed ten-day marriage in which he gave up everything he possessed. He broke out into a rage, committing a string of felonies before being caught and locked up in the state penitentiary. When he is released, Marvin Macy returns to the town and begins to take advantage of Cousin Lymon's admiration for him, using him to crush Miss Amelia's heart. Macy and Miss Amelia engage in a physical fight, and just as Miss Amelia is about to take the upper hand, Lymon jumps her from behind, allowing Macy to prevail. Macy and Cousin Lymon ransack the café, break the till, steal Miss Amelia's curios and money, and disappear from town, leaving Miss Amelia alone. The novella ends with "The Twelve Mortal Men", a brief passage about twelve men in a chain-gang, whose actions outline what happened in the town. Adaptations The Ballad of the Sad Café was adapted into a stage play of the same name by Edward Albee in 1963. Albee's play was adapted by screenwriter Michael Hirst into a 1991 film of the same name starring Vanessa Redgrave and Keith Carradine.[1] References ^ "The Ballad of the Sad Cafe". AFI Catalog of Feature Films. Los Angeles, California: American Film Institute. Archived from the original on April 24, 2019. External links Time article, June 04, 1951 Retrieved from " Analysis of The Ballad of the Sad Cafe by Carson McCullers The Ballad of the Sad Cafe by Carson McCullers is a story of love illustrated through the romantic longings and attractions of the three eccentric characters; Miss Amelia, Cousin Lymon, and Marvin Macy. McCullers depicts love as a force, often strong enough to change people's attitudes and behaviors. Yet, the author seems to say, if the love is unrequited, individuals, having lost their motivation to change, will revert back to their true selves. The allure of the different characters, which is never revealed by the author, seems to indicate that feelings of love and attraction are not necessarily reasonable or understandable to others.Miss Amelia is self-reliant, outspoken and very much a loner. She stands six foot one inch tall and has a strong, masculine build. Her grey eyes are crossed, and the rest of her features are equally unattractive. Yet, the people of the small, southern town of Cheshaw accept her quirkiness because of the exquisite wine that she sells in her store and for her free doctoring and homemade remedies. Still, everyone is shocked when the handsome outlaw, Marvin Macy, falls in love with her.Marvin is a "bold, fearless, and cruel" man who changes his unlawful ways to win Miss Amelia's love. Rather than robbing houses he begins attending church services on Sunday mornings. In an effort to court Miss Amelia, he learns proper etiquette, such as "rising and giving his chair to a lady, and abstaining from swearing and fighting". Two years after Marvin's reformation, he asks Miss Amelia to marry him. Miss Amelia does not love him but agrees to the marriage in order to satisfy her great-aunt. Once married, Miss Amelia is very aloof towards her husband and refuses to engage in marital relations with him. After ten days, Miss Amelia ends the marriage because she finds that she is unable to generate any positive feelings for Marvin. Several months after the divorce, Marvin reverts back to his initial corrupt ways and is "sent to a state penitentiary for robbing filling stations and holding up A & P stores" Just as love had changed Marvin, so too did it change Miss Amelia. In the mid 1930's, several years after Miss Amelia's divorce, Lymon, a hunchback, comes to Miss Amelia claiming to be a distant cousin. She readily provides Cousin Lymon with food and board, and eventually any material object that he desires.

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