LITERARY REVIEW:

OSCAR WILDE’s “The nightingale and the rose”

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The nightingale and the rose is an emotional story following the theme of the nature of love. Oscar Wilde gives us the impression it is a fairytale about true love, but as we read on, we realize how ironic the story is. The supposed love between the student and the girl proves to be a shallow love based on materialistic happiness, while the story’s irony also lies in the nightingale’s sacrifice, the only character that gives pure and unconditional love.

At the beginning of the fairytale the student gives the impression that he has a deep understanding of the meaning of true happiness, he thinks that happiness should not depend on unimportant things such as a single rose. He wants badly to find this red rose that will enable him to share a dance with the girl and be able to show his “true love” for her. However, while we are given the hope that the impossible might turn into possible when the student gets a red rose unexpectedly and he gives it to the girl they still do not share a romantic moment together.

Despite the fact that we are given the impression that the student is truly in love, there are parts of the text that show the opposite. First of all, the magic of nature doesn’t touch the student just as it touches a person in love. When he hears the nightingale’s song he claims that there aren’t any feelings underneath. Also he finds common characteristics between the nightingale and a selfish artist whose song has no benefit.

Not only has the student no real feelings for the girl but also he has grown apart from nature. Another point that proves that he isn’t really in love is that he falls asleep while thinking of the girl. The final point which confirms that he didn’t have real feelings was when the materialistic girl rejected him because he wasn’t rich and as she said jewel cost more than roses. What she didn’t realize was that the nightingale had paid the biggest prize of all for that rose, as her life costs more than any jewel in the world.

After this the student disputed the meaning of true love, he gave up quickly and right away he took a book and started reading it. Of course if he was really in love he would have fought for his love and would have spent time to get over the feelings he had for the girl.

The nightingale, which is a totally different character, made the ultimate sacrifice herself because the life of a little bird is nothing like real love. The nightingale wants the student to experience the love that he was dreaming about. Also she didn’t know it the girl loved the boy or she would accept the rose, but she gave her life away so as to at last offer him a chance. To sum up the nightingale is the most likeable character in the whole story, she is unselfish, kind, nice, and dares to sacrifice her own life for true love.