IN-DEPH ANALYSIS

Discussion about March’s attraction towards the fox and Henry

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In the present work, I am going to discuss March’s attraction towards both the fox and Henry. Before that, I would like to make a short introduction of the short written by DH Lawrence. It was published in 1922 and is set in Berkshire (England). The World War I is just over and the armies are coming back home. The focus of the story is on the rural lives of two “young” women, about thirty. They are trying to live alone relying on their own strength only. Anyway winter is getting near and they seem to have only a few ideas on how to carry on farm so it is clear they need a male figure, one who better knows how to manage it.

DH Lawrence creates two characters functional to the development of the story: they are the cause of March and Banford’s problems and the reason of the women’s division.

March's introduction is created with the purpose make the reader better understand her behaviour towards the fox: right from the first scene of the short story, she is well defined. Indeed her physical description is immediately given: “*March was more robust*” and it seem she is like that also psychologically. One should imagine her behaviour from the speaking voice’s information “*she had learned carpentry and joinery at the evening classes in Islington. She would be the man about the place”*. Therefore D.H Lawrence’s description of March conveys her strength and pragmatic way of behaving.

Now, one may wonder why, if she behaves like a man, March and Banford need one.

Another relevant of March's characteristic is that she is presented as always absent minded and one who is thinking often unclear. The textual clues help represent her dissatisfaction with her daily life and her wil of change it.

Also one should wonder why DH Lawrence chose “March” as the name of the protagonist. One possible reason is that the writer may have chosen a name to somehow represent her personality: march is the month during which female foxes are fertile so male foxes are “active” and can satisfy their sexual instinct. Now, I would like to make a short digression: the fox is a male animal and indeed D.H. Lawrence referred to the fox with a subject pronoun referred to the male gender “he”.

A second possible answer to the question is D.H. Lawrence chose a name that could be representative of the conflict between the two women and the animal: an inner war. So the name refers to the third month of the year, consecrated to the god Mars, the god of the war.

If you take into consideration the first hypothesis, it will help explain March’s attitude and attraction to the animal: as does the fox during Spring, March wants to satisfy her sexual desire one that cannot be satisfied satisfed with Banford. Indeed her sexual need is confirmed by her dream when she dreams of objects such as *“mouth” “tail” ”fur”* and according to Freud they are all sexual images in dream as he said: “*The genitals may even be represented in dreams by other parts of the body* […] ”.

Important to notice is also that the fox represents an enemy for the women since it steals their chicken. It is decided the animal must be shot, but he is too clever for them “*… he seemed to circumvent the girls deliberately*”. Moreover “*he was difficult as a serpent to see*”: there is a clear reference to the Bible episode when the Serpent suggests Eve should eat the apple from the tree of knowledge . The serpent stands for the “*forbidden*” and it follows that this could be the reason why March is so attracted by him. Female gender is generally attracted by what is difficult to obtain. Indeed the fox obsesses March since their first encounter. Also she recognizes him as if they had met before. Now she is determined to find him not to kill him but to interact with him because “*she was possessed by him*” as when two lovers can meet again.

The juxtaposition between the image of the fox and the image of the Serpent elicits a reflection: the animal may stand for the male gender and for the forbidden and therefore you can understand that what may create disorder is masculine. March and Banford are trying to fight it because the relationship between the two women excludes men.

The other character mentioned is Henry, a soldier: at first he appears as a young soldier who is coming back home from war and immediately afterwards he becomes a March's suitors. March is attracted by the soldier as she is attracted by the fox, but the element that makes the two ones different is Henry is a human being. It goes without saying that materially speaking he can satisfy March’s desire, on the contrary, the fox is an animal and it is impossible for the animal to satisfy March's desire. This explains why D. H. Lawrence has had Henry kill the fox. One may advance the hypothesis that through this last image the writer wants to convey his point –of-view about the different behaviour and attitude on one hand of the female gender and on the other of the male gender.

But the story is about two young women that even with difficulties or problems manage somehow to live together while generally men do not.

At this point one should wonder why March is attracted by Henry if she is more masculine than feminine. The answer may be found in the plot and the characters’ hierarchy: Banford depends on March but March does not depend on her.

The attraction between March and Henry is mutual, Banford knows she will be left out if March marries the soldier so she complains with her friend: Henry understands what kind of enemy she could be. Banford is frail and so her end seems to be clearly programmed: as the soldier killed the fox, he will kill Banford, too as she is the other obstacle that separates him from March.

In conclusion as the intelligent reader understood, D.H. Lawrence offered to their readers an opposite point of view of the role of women in society in contrast to the male chauvinist one of the 1922. Indeed he gives to the female protagonists of the short story the possibility to survive during time of war and shortage by their own, ready to face to every problem that will puts in an appearance to them.