

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

Having read and analysed the novel, the present writer arrives at a conclusion that the subject matter of A Lost Lady is dignity and morality. She thinks that A Lost Lady is a novel about a beautiful aristocratic lady who cannot maintain her dignity. All of Mrs. Forrester's actions and reactions as the protagonist of this novel lead the reader to grasp the theme, namely, One has to keep one's dignity and morality even though one is not prosperous any more.

In Willa Cather's A Lost Lady, the present writer finds out that the protagonist plays a significant role in revealing the theme. Cather presents an aristocratic lady who marries a rich contractor who loves her very much. At the beginning of the novel, Mrs. Forrester is praised for her excellent attitude, behaviour and characteristics.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Forrester soon changes, especially when her husband Captain Forrester is no longer in a good condition physically or financially. It becomes clear that Mrs. Forrester's intention when marrying Captain Forrester had just been for her husband's money, power and social position. The present writer

sees that Mrs. Forrester's reason is not love at all. It can be proved that when the Captain is no longer prosperous, she starts to change for the worse.

The present writer sees that the author has effectively presented the theme of A Lost Lady. It deals with faithfulness and dignity of a woman. Mrs. Forrester's characteristics change in the course of the story since she is first introduced, when she seems to be a lady-like aristocratic woman. However, she changes into a different woman who is no longer faithful and honourable. This change happens due to her husband's financial degradation as well as physical condition.

Mrs. Forrester is a beautiful and elegant woman. She is twenty-five years younger than her husband. Based on this wide age range, the present writer comes to a conclusion that there is something hidden when she marries Captain Forrester. At the beginning of the story, it tells about Mrs. Forrester's loyalty to Captain Forrester. She treats her husband lovingly, tenderly and with respect. It makes all of Captain Forrester's friends agree that the Forrester family is a perfect family.

On the other hand, the present writer notices that Mrs. Forrester's disloyalty begins when her husband's financial situation is at a risk. Mrs. Forrester dares to have a secret relationship with an attractive bachelor, Frank Ellinger. She makes dates with Ivy Peters without her husband's knowledge. Moreover, the turning point is when Captain Forrester is going bankrupt and later gets a stroke. Mrs. Forrester's character soon changes. She does not care about her husband's necessities any more.

Mrs. Forrester's loyalty changes to disloyalty. As an aristocratic lady, she actually has to be wise in keeping her husband's dignity and must always accompany him. On the contrary, now Mrs. Forrester no longer respects her husband. Mrs. Forrester cannot face her problem wisely; therefore, she tries to escape and choose an independent life.

The present writer also notices that this situation can be found in our society, where money can be the only reason for getting married. Mrs. Forrester is a "wonderful" wife when she first marries Mr. Forrester; however, she becomes an immoral and honourable woman due to her husband's poor health and his financial ruin.

In relation to the theme, the present writer discovers that the theme of A Lost Lady is revealed clearly by the protagonist. She sees that Cather gives profound messages to the readers and she concludes that the theme of the novel serves as a moral lesson as well. A wife has to be loyal to her husband, facing all problems without a change in marital faithfulness.

In addition, one should keep one's dignity and morality even though one is not prosperous anymore. For these reasons, the present writer is of the opinion that Cather has succeeded in presenting the theme of the novel that can serve as a moral lesson. Obviously, Cather would like to show that a harmonious family is based on loyalty from a sincere heart and a sense of responsibility.

To end this thesis, the present writer is going to adopt this novel as one of her references and 'guide' in her life in society. For this particular reason, the present writer considers Willa Cather's A Lost Lady to be worth reading and analyzing.