

REVIEW:

George Bernard Shaw: *PYGMALION*

Pygmalion... when I first heard the title of our home-reading book, it seemed very familiar to me. I had a feeling I had already come across this story one day. And this prediction was soon confirmed. Reading the first few chapters brought back the memory of seeing this play in the theatre a few years ago. I remembered the essence of the story, which helped me a lot and made reading a lot easier and faster, although I had never read an English book in the form of a play before.

The central figure of the play is Eliza. She represents an outcast from society, a shabby and filthy flower girl in her twenties, who has no friends and no life at all. She speaks in an awful dialect, which betrays her origin with every word she says. The bet between two gentlemen entirely changes her life. The rest of the story shows the transformation of a girl from the lowest part of society to a lady on the highest level of behaviour and class.

The story does not contain much variety, the gist is concentrated on only one event. It is written in a completely different way that I am not used to. Personally, I prefer thrillers and whodunits to books where everything is founded on psychology of a person. Despite this, Pygmalion made quite a big impression on me. I started to think about the characters and the psychological moments of the story, coming to many conclusions.

The author brings us near the legend of Pygmalion, the artist who fell in love with his creation. In the story Mr. Higgins falls in love with Eliza, who represents his own work. But she completely rejects his existence, thinking he has abused her. I think the way she gets out with her disapproval of the way she has been treated, is too exaggerated and unfair. After all he has made her the way she is now - he created a lady. That is why she should show him a big respect and gratitude. The purpose of the book is also, in my opinion, to tell us that usually those who endeavour the most for making life pleasant to others only get rejected by them.

The actors in the book are described in an extremely detailed way. Despite only a few characters, Shaw made a variety of completely different personalities. Therefore, everyone can identify himself with one type of person in the book.

Like every book, Pygmalion also has its' bad sides. There are a lot of boring and unnecessary parts, which the writer could have taken out of the story. If the book was not that verbose, it would be much better.

I also did not like the way the epilogue is written. There is too much nonsense and needless information. The writer uses a too advanced level of English in this conclusive speech. Some parts I had to read twice to get the ideas across.

The sum of all my opinions is not as clear as I thought it would be. But something I know for sure. I enjoyed watching the play in the theatre more than reading the book. That might be just because I saw the play earlier. What would my opinion have been, if I had read the book first? That I will never know.