

The relationship between Jimmy and Alison

Usually a man and a woman get married because they feel love for each other and the continuous wish to share their destinies for as long as they live. Marriage is a bond made by two people who sign two sheets of paper, expressing eternal loyalty. But sometimes a simple signature is not good enough. You have to work hard for a marriage to work.

The relationship between Alison and Jimmy started off badly. They met at a party where there were a lot of high-class people and Jimmy stood out as the man, who came in a worn jacket and battered trousers. He was educated but not educated enough to fit in the group of people they called higher-class. That is why Alison noticed him and that is why he could not stop staring at her. She was everything he despised but at the same time he felt this wild attraction because she was so subtle and elegant. Nothing seemed to bother her or at least she hid it very well. She was taught to hide her feelings no matter what. He on the other hand was so impulsive and appeared so rough that all the ladies could not help, but gaze at this somewhat attractive man.

Their marriage presented a shock for many people. She was an upper-class girl in her early twenties used to live by the book of rules. He was a young stallion who could not be tamed and used every single opportunity he had to express his rebellious beliefs. Here we can face a great gap between two social classes. After they got married they moved into an apartment in Poplar where they shared their private life with Jimmy's friend, Hugh Tanner. That was a bad idea for they should have had some time to get to know each other, not to embark into a relationship triangle without knowing anything about how to lead a married life, yet. After Hugh left, Jimmy's rage fell upon Alison for he blamed her for Hugh's departure.

Later on, they met Cliff and together with Jimmy they opened up a sweet-stall. Now Alison occupied the spot suitable for the wife of a working-class man. She was doing laundry, cleaning up Jimmy's mess, ironing their clothes without complaining about it. Jimmy blamed her for that. She was quiet and accepted everything that had come upon her for she had been taught that way. Jimmy was mad at her because he wanted her to scream and show if she is angry or sad, not to just gaze into every day as if she had no feelings at all. He said at one occasion, he wished she would become pregnant and would lose her baby, so she could finally become a human being and show how a loss could affect her too. The dramatic irony is, she really lost the baby she was carrying for some months.

Before the incident with her baby, she had left Jimmy. Helena occupied her spot and Alison left with her father because she could not take his insults and abuses anymore. When he pushed Cliff into her so she hit the ironing board and burnt herself, she knew something had to be done if she wishes to keep the child who was growing inside of her. After some time she returned because she felt so empty inside now that she lost the one thing that could bring her joy and happiness, that one reminder of her relationship with Jimmy. After she had put up Jimmy's ignorant behaviour for he did not want to admit he is actually glad she returned, she finally started screaming at him, weeping and expressing all her pain. He finally saw the damage he is doing to her although we cannot say he really understood it. He tries to console her with the bear and squirrel game which they used to join on an erotic level which seemed to be the only level accessible to them. They were no normal couple nor they had pretended to be. The only time they seemed like a normal couple was in their bed where

there was no prejudice nor complaints, only plain pleasure of two people who are – or used to be – in love.

Jimmy saw a potential threat in Alison. She represented everything he could not stand and everything he had hated. That is why he could not love her as any other girl. She never acted in a way which would provoke his outbursts of rage and anger but she had to put up with them nonetheless. I believe Alison is a stronger character for it is easy to yell and burst out at every single occasion like Jimmy did, but it is harder to keep your pain inside of you like you have been taught to do all your youth. Jimmy wanted to change her as much as he wanted to change the way of living in Great Britain. He belonged in the British Renaissance where people were undergoing different types of changes and outbursting citizens were a common thing.

Eventhough they could not stand eachother in a way, they loved one another even more. If they had not, they would have never been together for that long. They needed eachother like the air they were breathing. Allthough the air was filthy, it was their only mean to survive so they had to breathe it in. Alison as the squirell and Jimmy as the bear. They had to play the game. The social classes cannot reconcile completely but they can work to get to a point from which they just except the fact, they were meant to live together. Alison and Jimmy accepted that. Could you?