

Roles and Impressions within Romantic Relationships and Heartbreak

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EXPLANATION OF SOCIOLOGICAL RELEVANCE

This collection of four poems explores the breakdown of romantic relationships that leads to heartbreak through the use of metaphorical and allegorical comparison, particularly through imagery found in fairytales or mythical and mystical lore. Sociology has a keen interest in the dynamics of social relationships, which includes how individuals collectively navigate romantic connections. Such relationship interactions have become key sociological topics, with several sociological theories offering insight into ways of understanding interpersonal communication and conscious or subconscious negotiations that occur. According to role theory, social interactions are greatly informed by established norms and presumed or assumed roles. Under exchange theory, relationships can be viewed as continually weighing pros and cons or as gauging trade-offs of costs and benefits, including comparing alternative options when deciding to continue a relationship. Impression formation often comes into play for one's overall perception of others and impression management is the act of someone trying to endear or ingratiate oneself with others when attempting to maintain or even strengthen a relationship bond. Role strain occurs when an individual within a relationship feels like they are unable to uphold that which is expected of them. Romantic relationships tend to be even more heightened than average interpersonal relationships due to heightened feelings and emotions. Symbolic interactionism can emerge as romantic partners try to make gestures of love towards one another, but such symbolism does not guarantee relational compatibility.

A Fairytale, Ending

How far I've come, how far you're gone
Instead of queen, I was your pawn

What once upon a time you swore
Became a never-ending chore

You live happily, I live ever after
An unfair tale now ending in disaster

I slept through all the lies it seems
For this is nothing like my dreams

Between all the words you never wrote, and the ones I never read
We let too many things ride off and pass us by unsaid

Your noble steed has shrunk in size
There is no place for me at your side

Your siren voice did play its part
Alluring out my foolish heart

You fished me out to help me roam
But interest dissolved like sea foam

Which apple was coated with your spell?
How blindly for your charms I fell

To the eye your looks did please
But underneath there hid a beast

Your big blue eyes and winning grin
Distracting signs of the wolf within

The magic shoe slipped off my foot
You smashed it to pieces with nary a look

No wonder left in Neverland
You lost me when you forced my hand

I closed my eyes to kiss you hard
When I should have been on my guard

I closed my eyes to kiss your cheek
But should have known a frog was weak

Pinocchio Pawn

These puppet strings entangle me and confuse my every step
I try to gather what little strength is left in me,
but the struggle seems in vain
Every limb and my very heart are still controlled by you
Every movement, a memory of submitting to your masterful manipulation
I feel half alive but hardened to this world
I can't take a step without feeling
the remnants of your power tugging me back
I speak lies - even to myself- without realizing until I see a mirror
Then my growing nose shows my folly and downfall
I wish to be real but flesh and blood hurt, too
Which is worse?
The pain of being trapped or of breaking free?
You praised my looks and performance
but the compliments were just more ways of binding me to you
Did I play my part well, master?
Was I everything you whittled me down to be?
This wooden shell my prison and casket be
as I rot away, hidden from the world's eye
They see my painted-on expression of contentment
but that which controls me remains invisible to them
I need to sever the ties that hold me to you
I'm a Real Girl now

Holy Grail

A romantic gift asked for in innocence
Now sits untouched of true experience
Too many thoughts of use led to idealization
Cementing its spot on the shelf in realization
That when you give something worth
Sometimes perception overshadows its birth
Naive eyes open wide to what appears
Seeing something forever tainted by our fears

AFTERLIFE

When you ghosted me,
at first
I hoped to haunt
your ever-waking step
with hell fury
I'd slip

into
your dreams
your things
your very way of life
You'd think of me
with grand regret
seeing visions
that you can't reject
yet knowing
there would be no belief
or support from others
over what you were seeing
no relief
The tables would turn
from the beyond
the one spurned
now taunting you
No heavenly respite
from the raging storm
You could not love
so turned my heart to hate
The borderlines for favorites
split at the seams
to extremes
Fraying nerves and alliances

But I am not a specter
I never meant to be menacing
or unpleasant
or life draining
My own fears
forced meaning
from apparitions
projections too fantastical
for any living being
to embody

So, it is up to you
to remember
to forget
all your deeds
and dealings
Because
if I haunt you
I'd have to haunt me, too