A Rose For Emily 2 Essay, Research Paper

A Rose for Emily

Emily s Father

Throughout this story, the overbearing presence of Emily Grierson s father is perhaps the greatest influence on her behavior. The story describes how Miss Emily s father rejected her suitors by standing in front of her and aggressively clutching a horsewhip whenever the young men came to call. Without her fathers influence and overprotective behavior it is likely that Emily would have made one of her suitors her husband when she was still of suitable marrying age for that time period.

When Emily s father died the women of the town called on her to offer their condolences and aid as was their custom when someone suffered a tragic loss. Emily met the ladies at the door and with no trace of emotion or grief on her face she sent them away explaining that her father was indeed alive and well. Emily kept this up for three days and finally gave in just as the townspeople were going to forcibly take the body from her.

All of her life up until his death Emily s father controlled her and made all of her decisions for her. When he died Emily was left alone finally able live her own life, but since her father had been controlling her for so long she wasn t able to function without him. Since she wasn t able to function without his presence Emily chose to live her life as if her father was still with her. She spent the majority of her time inside of her house because that was where she could best feel her father s comforting dominance.

Emily was extremely resistant to modern changes in the outside world affecting her own world because she was determined to live in the past with the ghost of her father. When the new age of city authorities in the town visited her to collect taxes they felt she owed, she sent them away explaining that she didn t have any taxes because the mayor of an earlier generation had remitted them. When the town got free postal delivery Emily alone refused to let the numbers be fastened above her door.

Emily s relationship with Homer Barron, the construction foreman, was a desperate attempt to save herself from living the rest of her life alone with only the shadow of her father to control her. Emily wanted a real physical presence in her life to dominate her just as her father had done and she felt Homer was her only chance to have this. When Emily realized Homer wasn t interested in marriage or a commitment of any kind she knew that he was bound to leave her eventually. To prevent him from deserting her she poisoned him and kept his body locked away in the upstairs of her old house.

The body of Homer came to serve Emily as the physical representation of the controlling presence in her life, her father, and she found comfort in sleeping next to him. The fact that the body was Homer s and not her father s was of little consequence to Emily, if the townspeople hadn t forced her to give up her father s corpse, then he would have lain in place of Homer on the bed.

Emily s unhealthy attachment to her father suggests that she may have had an incestuous relationship with him while he was still alive and she used the body of Homer Barron to continue this relationship.