

Jamaica Kincaid's Girl Story Analysis

Posted on August 27, 2021

Girl is one of the short stories written by [Jamaica Kincaid](#). It is a dramatic monologue in which a mother advises her daughter to be "the girl". The tone of the story is quite aggressive, in which a mother emphasizes teaching her daughter how to save herself from sexual exploitation. However, it has been observed that her tone is caring and concerned (Snodgrass, 2019). When a mother is concerned about her kids, her tone includes bitterness, control, and care. On the other hand, the tone of the daughter in this short story is inattentive and timid. There are variations of tone observed in this short story.

The tone of the story is naggy (annoying and irritating). Throughout the story, the mother has a complaining tone regarding the character of her daughter. From these lines in the story, we can confirm the bitterness of the mother's tone: *"Be sure to wash every day, even if it is with your spit"* (Rabea & Almahameed, 2018). The seriousness of the tone of the mother is evident as *"don't sing Benna in Sunday school"*.

Analyzing the mood of the story, it won't be wrong to say that a mother treats her kids sometimes harshly because she wants them to become better persons in society. When a mother is teaching her kids, especially her daughter, we can observe a mix of tones and moods. We also have evidence of a soft tone of advice in this story: *"Cook Pumpkin fritter in very hot sweet oil; soak your little clothes right after you take them off"*. In this story, we have observed that the behavior of a mother is highly controlling, and even she doesn't allow her daughter to eat something of her choice. *"Don't eat fruits on the street-flies will follow you"*. This statement from the story shows that the mother has an over-controlling nature.

The style and tone of the story show that it is written in dramatic monologue, as the author has used the second person. When the readers read the story, they would feel like they are being advised and instructed by their mother (Rosenberg, pp. 1238-1239). It is also observed that Jamaica Kincaid has used italic fonts to differentiate the dialogues of the girl (daughter) and mother. For example, *"But what if the baker won't let me feel bread?"*

Considering the structure of the poem, it could be seen that the sentences of the poem are long and have fewer punctuations. Long sentences are frequently used in this story, and that could be seen in the text: *"This is how to love a man; if this does not work there are others ways; and if they don't work feel too bad about giving up"*. Another important point noticed in this short story is that Jamaica Kincaid is a Caribbean writer and uses Caribbean words in her writing. For example, the word "Okra" means a tree, which is a Caribbean word and "Dasheen" is also a Caribbean word, which means some kind of dish. The choice of the common language and national language appeals to the readers and reflects her association with her language. Kincaid has used semicolons in her work to separate the advice and commands of a mother that separate conflicting feelings of a daughter from that of the

mother.

Taking a look at the choice of words, format, long sentences, tone and mood of the poem, it could be said that the author captured the attention of the readers. This selection of the mentioned elements shows the message of the story short on the readers. The tone of the story arouse pity and sympathy of readers for the daughter “girl” as she is being controlled by her mother and could not do anything on her own. The use of Caribbean words in the work reflects the attachment of the author to her language. The style and choice of words show sympathy for a mother who is concerned about her daughter and tries to make her understand things that she must avoid to protect herself.

The selection of the words in the poem “Girl” shows her understanding of the composition and the arrangement of different feelings and ideas. The choice of the words also reflects Jamaica Kincaid’s attachment to her national language. She used some words from her native language in this poem that show her attachment to her mother tongue. She used simple but catchy and grabbing words that depict the feelings and thoughts of both characters in this short story (Spencer, 2019). It could be said that she knows the mastery art of selection of the words. She has inculcated in the reader’s sympathy for both characters, though the language is bitter. The readers could come to know what is the main theme of this short story. Punctuation, words, mood, and tone are all the presentation of the author’s view and association with her national language. The effect of the poem on the readers is that they feel emotional and catchy because of the language used by Jamaica Kincaid.

Works Cited

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