How Green Was My Valley Essay, Research Paper

In some relationships between couples, things may not go according to plan. There are stones in their paths that do not allow them to continue on, as a couple. In How Green Was My Valley, by Richard Llwellyn, characters are unable to express their true feelings for each other. Mr. Gruffydd and Owen do not follow the real desires of their hearts because their pride gets in the way; this decision ends up hurting not only them, but also destroying Angharad and Marged, the women they love.

Mr. Gruffydd and Owen deny their true feelings because they let their ego interfere. For example, when talking to Bronwen about Marged, Owen tells her that “he is not in love with [Marged], after everybody [has] a hand in the courting” (p. 94). Owen wants his relationship to be kept a secret, but Marged’s father sees them kissing. He lets his pride get in the way of how he truly feels and he can not continue to love Marged anymore. In addition, after Marged’s father finds them making out, Owen realizes that he “will never forget that as long as he is living” (p. 91) and later on “Owen [could] not be found that night” (p. 91). After being tortured by his brothers, Owen is scarred for life with a memory that will never go away. Owen has to run away from his problems, because he could not stand the embarrassment. Like Owen, Mr. Gruffydd also allows his self-respect to get in the way; for example, when Huw and Bronwen are talking about Mr. Gruffydd’s problem, Bronwen says, “[Mr. Gruffydd's] trouble is conscience. [Angharad] is going on for eighteen. He is near to forty. And a poor man to the end of his days” (p. 263). Mr. Gruffydd is letting his age difference get in the way of falling in love with Angharad. Even Bron thinks his working conditions will not be enough to support Angharad and himself. Owen and Mr. Gruffydd let their pride get in the way and it prevents them from loving the ones they really love.

Because the Mr. Gruffydd and Owen are unable to be with the ones that they are madly in love with, their emotions drain out. For example, when Owen is trying to get Marged back, he sobs “‘Oh, Marged, my beautiful one. What did I do to you, devil from Hell that I am? What did I do?’” (p. 127). Owen feels really terrible now that Marged is no longer his. He wonders why she will not accept him anymore, even though he wants to be with her once again. Along with Owen, Mr. Gruffydd’s feelings also disappear, like when Huw asks Bron how different Mr. Gruffydd is, she replies “Empty he is, empty as a split pea pod” (p. 296). Mr. Gruffydd’s thoughts and dreams vanish into thin air and even Bronwen realizes it. Without Angharad, he can not be complete. Furthermore, when Huw finally notices Mr. Gruffydd’s change, he “[thinks he is] the only one in the village to know how much. He [seem] tired, and yet restless, and somehow older, not with lines in the face, or white coming to his beard, but something dark in the eyes made him so” (p. 331). Huw sees that Mr. Gruffydd just sobs around without the one woman that he truly loves. With the absence of Angharad, he gradually ages, but in an emotional way, where he feels that he should no longer love. Both the souls of Mr. Gruffydd and Owen vanish into the thin air, after they unable to be with the ones that they want to be with.

With the spirits of Mr. Gruffydd and Owen washed away, the lives of Marged and Angharad disappear too. For example, when Huw visits Angharad at Tyn-y-Coed, she tells him that “[she looks] ill and [she] should take care of [herself]. Everybody coming in the house says so. So [Huw says] it, and [she] will rest quiet again” (p. 391), but then Huw replies, saying that the pain is “inside [of her]” (p. 391). Everyone thinks that Angharad is sick with a disease, like the common cold. Yet, Huw knows that she is not literally sick, but she is lovesick. Without Mr. Gruffydd, Angharad is a nobody. With Mr. Gruffydd hurting Angharad, Owen also puts Marged in great stress, like when Marged builds a workroom, it looks just like the “[Morgan's] back, with the same sort of bench and voice, all the tools in racks, with a hay-cutter on the side, and sacks of potatoes and seed piled along the walls, and onions and hams and leeks hanging up. Even beams had been nailed up, the same number and the same colour as ours, though there was no need of them, only to make the room more exactly like our back” (p. 171). Marged makes a room identical to the workshop, where the couple first kissed. Marged hopes that one day Owen will come to the room, so they can continue what they had before. Thus, the moment that Huw walks into the door of Marged’s workshop, she whispers “‘Come you. Long I have waited in this old place in the cold and now I shall be warm. Come and kiss me, Owen, come and kiss. Kiss your Marged. Never leave me again,’” (p. 171) to Huw. Owen’s love is fuel that lets her live life to the fullest, but when the fuel level goes low, Marged’s mind is lost. Marged goes crazy without Owen. Missing the love needed from their sweethearts, life is incomplete for the women.

The road for Mr. Gruffydd and Angharad’s relationship is unpaved, bumpy and curvy. Owen and Marged’s road has slight bumpy roads and the occasional paved road, with a few glitches in them. Not all roads are perfect. Relationships can often be compared to a road because they both are imperfect and have stones in the path, which stop them from continuing their ways.