



The Happy Prince

By Oscar Wilde

جامعة ساوة

كلية التربية

قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المرحلة الثانية

رقم المحاضرة 6

اسم المحاضر م. م. منار منصور علي

Setting

1- PLACE

The story unfolds in an unnamed European city, reminiscent of a Victorian urban environment marked by striking contrasts between wealth and poverty. Key locations include the high column on which the statue of the Happy Prince stands, the cathedral and public square, and the impoverished districts where the Prince sends aid through the Swallow.

However, Wilde never names the city and gives no concrete geographic markers. The city is intentionally generalized so that the moral message feels universal rather than tied to one real location

Setting

□ 2. TIME

In terms of **time**, the narrative takes place during the late 19th century , aligning with the social conditions and moral concerns characteristic of the Victorian era. The events occur over the course of late autumn and winter, a period highlighted through the Swallow's migration, the harsh weather, and the suffering of the city's poor. This seasonal backdrop intensifies the story's themes of hardship, charity, and sacrifice.

Main Characters

1. The Happy Prince

The Happy Prince is a gilded statue adorned with gold leaf, sapphire eyes, and a ruby on his sword-hilt. In life, he lived in a palace called *Sans-Souci*, shielded from any form of suffering. As a statue, positioned high above the city, he witnesses the poverty and misery that he never saw while alive. Moved by compassion, he gives away all his decorative riches to help the poor. The Prince symbolizes **selfless compassion, moral awakening, and the contrast between outward beauty and inner goodness.**

2. The Swallow

The Swallow is a small migratory bird who initially stops at the Prince's statue on his way to Egypt. Despite his intention to continue the journey, he is gradually moved by the Prince's compassion and agrees to carry out his requests. Through his loyalty and sacrifice—ultimately staying until he freezes to death—the Swallow represents **love, devotion, and the transformative power of empathy.**

Point of View

“The Happy Prince” is narrated from a **third-person omniscient point of view**. The narrator has full access to the thoughts, emotions, and motivations of various characters, especially the Happy Prince and the Swallow. This all-knowing perspective allows readers to understand the Prince’s compassion, the Swallow’s internal struggle and transformation, and the social conditions of the city. The omniscient narrator also provides moral insight and commentary, guiding readers toward the story’s critique of superficiality and societal inequality.

Themes

1 Compassion and Selflessness

The dominant theme is the moral value of compassion. Both the Happy Prince and the Swallow give up their own comfort, beauty, and ultimately their lives to help the suffering. Their actions highlight the idea that true worth lies in generosity and empathy, not in social status or material wealth.

2. Sacrifice

Sacrifice forms the emotional center of the story. The Prince sacrifices all his jewels and gold, while the Swallow sacrifices his migration, warmth, and life. Their mutual devotion emphasizes that genuine love often requires giving without expecting anything in return.

3. Social Injustice and Inequality

Wilde exposes the harsh realities of poverty through the seamstress, matchgirl, playwright, and other struggling townspeople. The sharp contrast between the luxurious past of the Prince and the misery of the poor reflects systemic inequality and critiques society's failure to care for the vulnerable.

Themes

4. Appearance vs. Reality

The story highlights how society judges worth based on external appearances. The Prince is admired only when he is beautiful and decorated. Once stripped of his gold and jewels, he is declared “ugly” and thrown away, despite his acts of profound kindness. This theme underscores the superficiality of societal values.

5. Hypocrisy of Authority

The Mayor and Town Councillors are satirical symbols of shallow leadership. They praise the statue only for its aesthetic beauty and dismiss it when it no longer serves their image. Their behavior exposes the emptiness and self-interest often present in public officials.

6. Love and Friendship

The bond between the Happy Prince and the Swallow grows into a relationship defined by mutual respect, devotion, and emotional loyalty. Their connection elevates the story from simple charity to a profound exploration of spiritual and emotional love.



The end



Thank you all for your attention and participation today. You did a great job!