



A Boy Daydreams in *Araby*

James Joyce's short story takes the reader on a roller coaster ride of childhood emotions that range from first crush to the nightmare of finding oneself in an unfamiliar place as all doors are closing.

The narrator finds himself in an Arabian bazaar as the lights are turning off and the shops are padlocked. He cannot fulfill the purpose for which he has been daydreaming for hours and counting seconds. He never succeeds in purchasing a gift for his beloved, and he is left with eyes burning *with anguish and anger*.

"My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) ... I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or, if I spoke to her, how I could tell her of my confused adoration. But my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires."

Araby is the story of childhood love unfolding in a mixed Irish and Arabic setting. Although the exotic place he seeks is never materialized, and one store that he goes to is not the mystical Eastern place he hopes to shop from, yet, the reader is left with a sense of the story taking place in an Arabian bazaar.

A child's fear of the unknown, of defeat, of never reaching his destination while minutes go by, is vividly described. The writer lets the readers taste again how important trivial disappointments used to be when they were children. It also points to how unimaginative adult life can be.

In short, James Joyce succeeds in creating an unforgettable character that remains on the mind long after the story is read. *Araby* is a short story that has the impact of a novel.