Zenia McLeod

Justification

*There Was Once*

If I were to describe the second speaker in *There Was Once* pertaining to feminism, I would describe them as being a person who believes in feminist liberation. This is the act of women being freed from the stereotypes and traditional beliefs of society. I think that this speaker would have a very voiced opinion about the way women are seen verses the way women should be seen. The speaker would believe that women should change the way they are viewed by the world by not being classified by society, understanding true beauty, and challenging everything.

In the story *There Was Once*, the second speaker questions the social economic status of the girl in the story. They state “poor is relative…socially economically speaking, she was not poor…come down to where they sleep in cardboard boxes, and I’ll show you *poor*.” This was in the conversation where the speaker challenged the writer to change young girl’s social status. The second speaker recognized that the first speaker was quick to classify her as poor because the condition the girl was living in. The first speaker didn’t acknowledge that she could be worse off. The message that can be pulled from this situation for women is to not let someone classify you or the conditions you are in as ‘poor’ because it’s not up to their standards of living. In the manifesto, the second speaker stated, “who needs Prince Charming anyways?” referring to Prince Charming in the story of Cinderella, which is the base of *There Was Once*. In Cinderella, the main character was freed from her life of oppression by marrying royalty instead of freeing herself. The second speaker would object to Cinderella gaining her freedom by letting the Prince take her away from a bad life.

The second speaker also brings up the issue of beauty and how it is portrayed in society. In the reading, it is said “women these days have to deal with too many intimidating physical role models as it is, what with those bimbos in the ads.” The speaker clearly has a problem with how media displays the same kind of beautiful women. Usually, a model is thought to be someone who is skinny and looks different from a lot of women in the world. If the speaker were to elaborate on this topic, she would probably make and exaggerated point of the diet and exercise it would take to become the size in fashion ads. They also point out that models can’t be an example of true beauty if they are recreating the way they look through makeup, hair and digital alterations. The second speaker makes a point to correct the first speaker’s comments on describing the character as “slightly overweight whose front teeth stuck out” by stating “I don’t think it’s nice to make fun of people’s appearances”. This is where, I believe, the speaker would condemn these physical appearances being used as punch line and referred to as not beautiful.

Finally, the second speaker would challenge all stereotypes about women. In the passage, the speaker questions every line and word said by the storyteller. It may come off as being pushy, but the speaker is just revealing that there is more than one opinion about how a story can be. The same way the speaker questions every word, they would question every label placed on women. They would want to bring up the fact that women are capable to do more and be more than society would think. The speaker would also want this revelation to be embraced by not only women, but by everyone. This would lead to a better attitude about and towards women in the world.

I used the dramatic and sarcastic voice of the second speaker, as well as their opinion to shed light on any view they would have on women. Feminist liberation would be a topic that the speaker would be passionate about, because it goes against the status quo of women are viewed in society. The speaker would challenge all that is said about women, forcing different views. They would also encourage women to question everything, and not be restricted by others opinions on their social status. They would also want women to not let anyone treat them as if they are a burden. Lastly, the speaker would force a new view of beauty in society by making sure that women know that beauty isn’t defined by what is in the media and maybe even seeing to it that all types of women are represented everywhere women are advertised.

Throughout the passage, the genders for either of the speakers aren’t clear. You get a sense that the first speaker is a man and the second one is a woman. However, there is no hard evidence in the passage that would give a clue to the gender of either of the speakers. The only indication that might steer towards the second speaker being a woman is when they state “…we all know what those twisted, repressed, middle-aged men are like”. This statement narrows the possibilities of the gender of the second speaker by letting the readers know that the second speaker isn’t a middle-aged man. This could be stretched to say that the speaker could be a woman because this is the only time where men are referred to as ‘those’, and separates them from the speaker. For my manifesto, I chose to work off of the possibility that the speaker was a woman, so I could be able to give a voice to the speaker. Without choosing a gender, it would be hard to say ‘we’ or ‘they’ without claiming a gender for the speaker.