
Stockholm Syndrome In Beauty And The Beast

Tale as old as time, true as it can be barely even friends, then somebody bends unexpectedly, is the infamous beginning of the opening song that introduces the classic love story of Beauty and the Beast. Beauty and the Beast is a tale about a young woman held captive by a beast in his castle after taking her father's place and later becomes his one true love. To the viewers of the 1991 film, many saw Beauty and the Beast as a troubled love story with a happy ending while many questioned Belle's free will in the situation. 90's feminists began to question if Belle was suffering from Stockholm Syndrome, a condition where the victim of a kidnapping or hostage situation develops affection or even sympathy for their captor.

In the beginning, Belle disagrees with the Beast and his demands as well as not having dinner with him. She knowingly disobeys his one rule in the castle by exploring the West Wing. When she ventures into the West Wing, the Beast goes into a violent outburst destroying every piece of antique furniture in the room. As he veres towards her it drives Belle to feel sympathy for him but also it causes her to renege on her original deal in taking her father's place and heading towards the door and leaving his castle. Through this ordeal, Belle cares more about satisfying her own personal desires than simply surviving. Experts define Stockholm Syndrome as usually developing out of a hostage's desperation to live another day. This is far from the case pertaining to Belle. If Belle was concerned with her survival, she would not have gone looking for her father in the first place and would not have volunteered herself to take his place and stay in the Beast's castle.

In the Disney tune, sung by Angela Lansbury, Belle begins to see the best in a different light. She sees that the Beast has become kinder and gentler and Belle is strikingly aware in her change in attitude towards the Beast. Belle is not in any way exhibiting the effects of Stockholm Syndrome. In exchange, the Beast is "exhibiting the inverse of Stockholm Syndrome, Lima Syndrome, which is where the abductor sympathizes with his hostage"(Poirier). When Belle and the Beast use the magic mirror to check in on her father, they learn Belle's father, Maurice, is dying in the forest. In that moment, the Beast releases Belle from their agreement and sets her free. Belle was given the option to return to her life before becoming the Beast's prisoner, and she chooses to return. Unlike the case of many abducted victims, Belle does not remain with her captor or chooses . Belle returns to her home and her life. Belle does not feel positive feelings towards the Beast until he changes back into his original form. She does not show any sympathy towards the Beast when he shouts insults at her and acts violent towards her. Belle only begins to feel for the Beast only once he starts treating her better and as his equal. In this act that is when she begins to change her feelings towards him. Belle never really develops pity or show sympathy for his situation, because she is never made of the circumstances of his transformation by him or his servants, Mrs. Potts, Lumiere, and LeFou. She is never made aware until she comes a torn picture of him hanging in the forbidden, West Wing.

90s Feminists and social justice crusaders seem to think Belle returned to the castle for the Beast because she had become victimized while living with the Beast. Belle was thought to be a woman who now sympathizes with her captor because of Stockholm Syndrome. Belle never indictacted any signs of returning to the Beast's castle until Gaston goes around the village and spreads malicious lies about the Beast, that riled up the townspeople as the head to kill the

Beast.

In conclusion, Beauty and the Beast is a film that has endured the test of time against social justice crusaders and political correctness to remain a beloved family movie. Stockholm Syndrome is a terrifying condition, that has happened to many victims as they try to survive through their ordeals and should most definitely face scrutiny if it is being placed in a positive light. But Beauty and the Beast is far from being a tale about Stockholm Syndrome, it is a tale as old as time that continues to entertain us with magic and hope of how much love can truly change us for the better if we allow it too.

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