

2. A Respectable Woman (Summary)

Main Characters of the Story

Mrs. Baroda: protagonist of the story wife of Gaston Baroda

Gouvernail: journalist, a college friend of Mrs. Baroda's husband

Gaston Baroda: Mrs. Baroda's husband.

Setting: Sugar plantation in the winter

The story 'A Respectable Woman' has been written by Kate Chopin. Kate Chopin was an American novelist and short story writer. She was born and brought up in St. Louis and lived in New Orleans after getting married to Oscar Chopin. She wrote more than hundred short stories and among them 'Disiree's Baby', 'Madame Celestin's Divorce' and 'A Respectable Women' are the most popular ones. The language which she used in her stories and novels are full of sexual connotations. The short story revolves around the character of Mrs. Baroda and her inner conflict as she finds herself attracted to her husband's friend Gouvernail. The conflict follows the pattern of classical fiction and moves from exposition to rising action and then to climax and resolution.

Mrs. Baroda finds Mr. Gouvernail staying with them in sugar plantation. She is dissatisfied that they have been doing a lot of fun. She has hoped to take rest but. She is also upset because her husband's friend Gouvernail is planning to stay a week or two at their plantation. She has never met Gouvernail, despite the fact that she is aware that Gouvernail and her husband were friends in college and that he is now a successful journalist. Before the meeting Mrs. Baroda has a mental image of him as a 'tall, slim, cynical; with eye-glasses, and his hands in his pockets. But a paradoxical thing happens after then. When she meets Gouvernail, who is slim but neither tall nor cynical, she discovers that she really likes him.

Mrs. Baroda gets wondered that why she loves Gouvernail since he makes no special effort to impress her in any other way. In the same way, she is unsure why she likes Gouvernail because she does not

see all of his positive characteristics. He doesn't appear intelligent, but in reaction to her excitement to welcome him and her husband's hospitality, he appears quiet and kind. He loves sitting on the field and listening to Gaston explaining sugar plantation methods. He does not seem to be very bright, but he does appear calm and polite. Mrs. Baroda finds Gouvernail to be a little confusing, yet she finds him to be charming and unoffensive. Unlike what she has heard from her husband Gaston, she finds him, way better than heard. She first leaves him alone with her husband, but as she works to overcome his nervousness, she begins to accompany him on walks. Her husband informs her that he will be staying another week and inquires as to why she does not want him to. Gaston is delighted when she says that she prefers him to be more demanding

Mrs. Baroda claims that she expected Gouvernail to be more interesting. Gaston tells her that he does not expect disturbance over his visit and that he just wants a break from his busy life. She sits alone on a bench later that night, puzzled and desiring to leave the plantation, having told her husband that she might go to the city in the morning and stay with her aunt.

She goes for the city the next morning and does not return until Gouvernail has left the city

Gaston requests that Gouvernail return the next summer, but she rejects. She subsequently changes her mind, much to her husband's surprise, who assures her that Gouvernail has not deserved her disapproval. She tells her husband, adding that she would now treat him with greater hospitality by kissing him and vows that she has "overcome everything". In this way, the story ends.