

**The theme of resentment in Carol Ann Duffy's poetry**

**Research question:** *To what extent can the poems "Mrs. Lazarus" and "Eurydice", from the 1999 anthology "The World's Wife", be considered explorations of resentment?*

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## Introduction

The emotion of resentment is explored in a great number of poems found in Carol Ann Duffy's 1999 poetry anthology "The World's Wife", a collection that involves the retelling of biblical and mythical stories, as well as historical events, from a female perspective. Two poems, in particular, that focus on the emotion of resentment, are "Mrs. Lazarus" and "Eurydice". "Mrs. Lazarus" revolves around the fictional wife of Lazarus, who according to the biblical story was resurrected, and her reaction to his death and unexpected resurrection. Similarly, "Eurydice" also revolves around a resurrection, as the poet presents a reworked version of the classical myth "Orpheus and Eurydice", as recounted by Eurydice. In both poems, an exploration of resentment allows Duffy to portray a range of emotional responses, which arise from the various constraining circumstances the speakers are confronted with in a patriarchal society. In "Mrs. Lazarus" the poet illustrates how resentment arises from the death of Lazarus itself, but is intensified through the unexpected resurrection which follows. Not only is the enormous suffering Mrs. Lazarus endured nullified, but Mrs. Lazarus also finds herself forced to reassume the position of wife to the now horrifically transformed Lazarus, abandoning her new relationship, after a brief period of emotional liberation. The introduction of a resentful female character into the reworked story allows Carol Ann Duffy to develop an alternative perspective on the revered miracle. Similarly, in "Eurydice", the poet constructs a new frame of reference which explores resentment, illustrating Eurydice's resentment regarding her objectification by the vain and absurd Orpheus, his intrusive attempt at resurrecting her, and her subordinated position as his wife, typist, and unwilling muse. As the emotion of resentment is a central theme within both poems, the question: "To what extent can the poems "Mrs. Lazarus and "Eurydice", from the 1999 anthology "The World's Wife", be considered explorations of resentment?" is worthy of investigation.

The scope of the research undertaken includes an in-depth analysis of both poems, with a particular focus on literary devices, and research on Carol Ann Duffy's work, specifically regarding the anthology "The World's Wife". In addition, definitions of the emotion of resentment and its multifaceted structure have been researched and integrated into the work.

## Main Body

Carol Ann Duffy, the current Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom, is well known for giving women a voice within her poems, as is the case in her 1999 poetry Anthology "The World's Wife". Elizabeth O'Reilly states in her article concerning the poet: "her work is highly acclaimed for being both literary and accessible, and she is regarded as one of Britain's most well-loved and successful contemporary poets."<sup>1</sup> Duffy creates a unique perspective regarding classical myths, biblical stories, and history, by portraying the feelings and opinions of women, using parts of the original tales and events, as well as creating versions of women whom she imagines being involved in them. Carol Ann Duffy's poems contain messages about the position of women - such as the unfavorable situations women face in society due to their gender -, which are relevant to the struggles women face nowadays. The poet uses direct address to captivate the readers and emphasize the relevancy of the poem's meaning. "The World's Wife" is an anthology in which the emotion of resentment is central to the stories of the women presented and can be considered a major concern of the poet. According to the sociologist Warren D. TenHouten, resentment can be described as "arising out of powerlessness...neither forgotten nor forgiven"<sup>2</sup>. He is of the opinion that individuals of subdominant groups are prone

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth O'Reilly, "Carol Ann Duffy", British Council Literature, accessed September 30, 2020, <https://literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/carol-ann-duffy>.

<sup>2</sup> Warren D. TenHouten, "From Ressentiment to Resentment as a Tertiary Emotion", *Review of European Studies* 10, no. 4 (2018): 49.

to feel resentful towards those treating them unfairly<sup>3</sup>. Women, who have been treated unequally to men for centuries, have been subject to various detrimental experiences, which have led to resentment over time. Within the anthology “The World’s Wife”, the poet explores how such predicaments create resentment, as she examines the plight women find themselves in due to societal expectations, and because of their relationships to men in a male-dominated world. Both “Mrs. Lazarus” and “Eurydice” focus on the concept of being denied the opportunity to move on from the past and to exercise free will as a woman. Additionally, TenHouten describes resentment as a tertiary emotion, consisting of various secondary emotions such as contempt, shock, and outrage, which themselves are compounded primary emotions<sup>4</sup>. Its connection to an array of emotions enables authors to express it in multiple ways, exploring the circumstances as well as the arising emotions which lead to resentment. This composes Duffy’s focus, as she presents how the inescapable circumstances the women in the poems “Eurydice” and “Mrs. Lazarus” find themselves in, result in emotions ranging from anger and grief to feelings of confinement, which ultimately constitute the resentment felt by the speakers of the poems. In “Mrs. Lazarus” and “Eurydice”, literary techniques such as metaphors which capture the strength of the women’s emotions, alliteration, syntax and tone, although more one of bewilderment, and sadness in “Mrs. Lazarus”, and outrage and sarcasm in “Eurydice”, are used to portray the emotions of the women. Furthermore, “Mrs. Lazarus” and “Eurydice” relate on a conceptual level, as in both circumstances women find themselves in detrimental situations due to a resurrection.

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<sup>3</sup> TenHouten, “From Ressentiment to Resentment as a Tertiary Emotion”, 50.

<sup>4</sup> TenHouten, “From Ressentiment to Resentment as a Tertiary Emotion”, 49.

## Literary Analysis

In “Mrs. Lazarus”, Carol Ann Duffy reworks the gospel story of the resurrection of Lazarus<sup>5</sup>. The original New Testament story recounts Lazarus being resurrected by Jesus four days after having died<sup>6</sup>. There is no mention of a wife in the original biblical story, Lazarus’s sisters being the only female figures presented<sup>7</sup>. In the narrative created by Carol Ann Duffy Mrs. Lazarus suffers greatly due to her husband’s death, and goes through a lengthy grieving process, portrayed in the first four stanzas of the poem, which finally allows her to heal and begin a new phase of life. Her brief period of happiness is then destroyed by the brutal resurrection of Lazarus who is in an appalling condition.

There is a tone of desperation and helplessness throughout the poem, highlighting Mrs. Lazarus’ grief and conveying her resentment that death has stolen her husband, as she “retched/his name over and over again, dead, dead”<sup>8</sup>. The diction chosen expresses the speaker’s feeling of revolt concerning Lazarus’ death, and repetition serves to create a tone of desperation, reflecting the speaker’s feelings. Duffy further accentuates the suffering caused by the death of Lazarus as Mrs. Lazarus explains that she “had wept for a night and a day”<sup>9</sup>. The syntax used here, whereby the poet reverses the saying of “a day and a night”, emphasizes the metaphorical darkness entrenching Mrs. Lazarus, arising from her profound feelings of grief. A tricolon and onomatopoeia are also employed by the poet to emphasize Mrs. Lazarus' despair as she

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<sup>5</sup> “John 11, NIV”, Bible Gateway, accessed October 14, 2020, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2011&version=NIV>.

<sup>6</sup> Bible Gateway, “John 11, NIV”.

<sup>7</sup> Bible Gateway, “John 11 NIV”.

<sup>8</sup> Carol Ann Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, in *The World’s Wife*, (London: Picador,2017),49-50, lines 4-5.

<sup>9</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, line 1.

“howled, shrieked, clawed”<sup>10</sup> at her late husband’s gravestone. The chosen verbs reflect her animalistic reaction to his death and create a highly distressed tone. Through the intense focus on Mrs. Lazarus’ grief, the readers’ understanding of her resentment at the close of the poem is facilitated, as her suffering seems to have been in vain. Furthermore, Mrs. Lazarus’ journey into grief is also illustrated through the imagery Duffy uses. The powerful metaphor, whereby Mrs. Lazarus informs the readers that she “learnt/ the stations of Bereavement, the icon of [her] face/ in each bleak frame”<sup>11</sup>, is an allusion to the stations of the cross; Mrs. Lazarus superimposes her face on the icons which depict Jesus’ journey to his crucifixion, illustrating the climax of her suffering and her resentment of death itself. It is thus all the more catastrophic for Mrs. Lazarus when an appalling version of her husband is resurrected.

Lazarus’ deplorable condition, which awakens feelings of disgust and horror, contributes to the resentment Mrs. Lazarus has towards the resurrection, as she is forced to become his wife again, rendering her helpless. Lazarus is described as “disheveled”<sup>12</sup>, “moist”<sup>13</sup>, and wearing “his rotting shroud”<sup>14</sup>. The diction conveys his degenerated and repellent condition, creating a tone of disgust. Olfactory imagery further stresses the repulsive and anomalous nature of the resurrection, from the speaker’s perspective, as Mrs. Lazarus “breathed/ his stench”<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, Lazarus himself is “croaking”<sup>16</sup>. This word implies that Lazarus has been brought back as a non-human creature, and the use of onomatopoeia, which creates an unpleasant sound,

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<sup>10</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, line 3.

<sup>11</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus” lines 11-13.

<sup>12</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus” line 39

<sup>13</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, line 39.

<sup>14</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus” line 38.

<sup>15</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus” lines 37-38.

<sup>16</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus” line 40.

further underlines his degraded almost animalistic condition. Contrary to a miracle supposedly signifying rebirth and life, the visual and sensory imagery creates a juxtaposing effect combining death with uncleanliness, which further delineates the absolute horror of Mrs. Lazarus' dilemma in the closing stanza, when she faces the newly resurrected Lazarus. Furthermore, Duffy portrays Mrs. Lazarus' instant shift into the enforced role of Lazarus' wife after his resurrection in the last stanza through referring to Lazarus as "cuckold"<sup>17</sup>, rendering Mrs. Lazarus as guilty of having committed adultery, although she was technically a widow. Therefore, what is considered an amazing miracle in the biblical story is reworked into a horrific scenario whereby Mrs. Lazarus is portrayed as the resentful victim of an unnatural event which deprives her of freedom.

Considering the intense feelings of loneliness Mrs. Lazarus has to endure during her period of grieving, her resentment regarding Lazarus' death is also made clear, as she is suddenly deprived of a husband and sexual partner. Her loss of identity as his wife, following Lazarus' death, is intertwined with her arising loneliness. She describes sleeping "in a single cot"<sup>18</sup> as a "widow"<sup>19</sup>, "one empty glove"<sup>20</sup>, and a "white femur/ in the dust, half."<sup>21</sup> The multitude of powerful images depict singularity and loneliness, as they portray fragmented versions of objects which are usually paired. Additionally, Mrs. Lazarus attempts to regain her sense of self as she "shuffled in a dead man's shoes"<sup>22</sup>. Here, sibilance accentuates the painful sound of a widow attempting to find comfort by moving around slowly in her dead husband's shoes. The

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<sup>17</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 40.

<sup>18</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 6.

<sup>19</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 7.

<sup>20</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus" line 7.

<sup>21</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", lines 7-8.

<sup>22</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 8.

speaker's loss of a sexual partner is also depicted, as she perceives herself as a "nun in a mirror, touching herself."<sup>23</sup> Mrs. Lazarus metaphorically identifying with a nun, suggests that a life of celibacy is all that she can imagine, or will be allowed to have as a widow. Additionally, the juxtaposition of a religious element with a sexual image depicts her religious noncompliance, and desire to fulfil her sexual needs which she is prohibited from doing. Thus, the readers learn that Mrs. Lazarus finds herself in a constraining situation, in which amidst her suffering she is unable to act according to her own needs.

After a period of great suffering, the sixth stanza marks a turning point in the poem, as the peaceful tone conveys Mrs. Lazarus' brief moments of happiness with a new lover. The initial four stanzas focusing on the grieving process Mrs. Lazarus goes through precede a strong statement at the beginning of the fifth stanza regarding the end of the period of intense grief, "[t]hen he was gone."<sup>24</sup> The finality of this short sentence leads into the passage of a newfound life for Mrs. Lazarus. The tone of finality also functions to put an end to that of desperation and suffering in the previous stanzas. In the context of the poem, this can be viewed as Mrs. Lazarus liberating herself, escaping the emotional confinement which Lazarus' death brought upon her. Consequently, the speaker finally embarks on a new relationship, recounting "the shock/ of a man's strength under the sleeve of his coat"<sup>25</sup>, when she is out walking with her new love. She is quick to mention that she has dedicated herself to properly mourning her husband, and thereafter describes being "healed, able/ to watch the moon occur to the sky"<sup>26</sup>. This metaphor creates a moving image which symbolizes a new beginning. However, the short-lived experience of peacefulness, characterized by the serene tone, is intercepted by a menacing one,

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<sup>23</sup>Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 11.

<sup>24</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 21.

<sup>25</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", lines 22-23.

<sup>26</sup> Duffy, "Mrs. Lazarus", line 28.

as Lazarus has been resurrected, the speaker being forced to confront this event, with people “bearing [her] / into the hot tang of the crowd”<sup>27</sup>. Mrs. Lazarus experiences helplessness, linked to a sense of resentment, as she is carried off by a mob, and physically forced in the direction of Lazarus. To a similar effect, the “sly light/ on the blacksmith’s face”<sup>28</sup> as well as the “shrill eye of the barmaid”<sup>29</sup> are described. Both images evoke a sensation of danger, creating a menacing tone which briefly foreshadows the horrific revelation about to happen. Additionally, the word “shrill” suggests a screeching sound implying hysteria, further underlining the distressing situation the speaker is unwillingly faced with.

The two poems “Mrs. Lazarus” and “Eurydice”, although based on stories with different contexts, both portray the marginalization of women and their subordinated relationships to men. “Eurydice” is based on the Greek mythological tale of Orpheus, who visits the underworld in hopes of resurrecting his dead wife<sup>30</sup>. In the original tale, Orpheus’ desire to resurrect Eurydice is his great love for her<sup>31</sup>. Charming the gods with his artistic talents, he is allowed to bring Eurydice back to the land of the living on the condition of not looking back at her until they have left the underworld<sup>32</sup>. Nothing, in this mythological tale, is mentioned of Eurydice’s feelings about being brought back to the land of the living. As Mary Louisa Lum states: “Negation of the opinions of the female is represented in “Eurydice”. Orpheus goes to the underworld to get his wife back and during the negotiations, no one asks Eurydice if she wants

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<sup>27</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, lines 34-35.

<sup>28</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, lines 32-33.

<sup>29</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, line 33.

<sup>30</sup> “Orpheus and Eurydice”, History Today, accessed 30 September, 2020, <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/foundation/orpheus-and-eurydice>.

<sup>31</sup> History Today, “Orpheus and Eurydice”.

<sup>32</sup> History Today, “Orpheus and Eurydice”.

to return to live.”<sup>33</sup>. However, Carol Ann Duffy reinvents the event, taking a female-based slant, as her poem focuses on the reaction of Eurydice. In contrast to “Mrs. Lazarus”, a more assertive tone is used, as the speaker’s resentment is characterized through feelings of anger and frustration, rather than the helpless suffering evident in “Mrs. Lazarus”.

Eurydice has finally found her peace in the underworld, as this is where she can remain safe from the persistent Orpheus. However, her happiness is short-lived as he arrives to claim her. Eurydice, content to be in the underworld, states: “It suited me down to the ground.”<sup>34</sup>. Her happiness is expressed through humorous irony, as she literally finds herself in the ground, namely the Greek underworld. Additionally, she finds the underworld to be “the one place you’d think a girl would be safe”<sup>35</sup>. This ironic and colloquial statement, directly addressed to the reader and typical of Duffy’s style, indicates that the underworld, usually characterized as a place of suffering, is Eurydice’s haven, where she is protected from what she describes as “the kind of man/ who follows her round”<sup>36</sup>. The description of Orpheus depicts him as oppressive and obsessive, suggesting that Eurydice had no respite from him. Additionally, the use of colloquial language creates an appeal to the modern reader concerning issues that are relevant to women in today’s society, such as being subject to harassment and not being allowed to be independent, both circumstances which result in resentment and anger. Eurydice’s happiness is obstructed, as she hears “a familiar knock-knock at Death’s door”<sup>37</sup>, which ironically alludes to the saying of “knocking at death’s door”, marking Orpheus’ arrival. The

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<sup>33</sup> Mary Louisa Lum, “Herstory: Feminizing Historical Narratives in Carol Ann Duffy’s the World’s Wife”, *International Journal of Language and Literature* 7, no. 1(2019): 18.

<sup>34</sup> Carol Ann Duffy, “Eurydice”, in *The World’s Wife*, (London: Picador, 2017), 58-62, line 10.

<sup>35</sup> Duffy, “Eurydice” line 16.

<sup>36</sup> Duffy, “Eurydice” lines 17-18.

<sup>37</sup> Duffy, “Eurydice” line 28.

onomatopoeic effect of the knocking, which is slow and drawn out, by use of the hyphen, creates a sense of dread linked to resentment, particularly when Eurydice mentions the familiarity of the foreboding knock.

The sensation that Eurydice is left little choice once she hears the knock is suggested by her lack of identity when alive, matter which contributes to the resentment surrounding Orpheus' intrusion. Even in death Eurydice's autonomy is constrained as she must unwillingly return to her overbearing husband. In Mrs. Lazarus, lack of choice also causes a mood of intense resentment. This can be seen in the description of the "hot tang of the crowd"<sup>38</sup>, which carries Mrs. Lazarus towards her zombie-like husband, causing suffocating sensations. Eurydice's depersonalization is illustrated as she explains that Orpheus, in his poetry, described her as "Dearest, Beloved, Dark Lady, White Goddess/etc., etc."<sup>39</sup>. The listing of the capitalized pseudo titles enforced onto Eurydice creates a bitter and resentful tone, as her inability to have her own identity is conveyed. Through the repetition of "etc." at the end of the statement, the poet further highlights the overpowering loss of identity Eurydice faced, suggesting a dreadful, entrapping situation. Moreover, the juxtaposing titles "Dark Lady" and "White Goddess" indicate that Orpheus assigned Eurydice a title according to the context of his poems, and that she is merely instrumentalized for the purpose of his poetry. Eurydice makes it clear that she would rather "speak for [her]self"<sup>40</sup>. This assertive statement sums up the source of Eurydice's resentment, as she was reduced to the titles attributed to her by her husband, her voice, and her right to autonomy being stolen by him. Thus, the portrayal of the tumultuous past life Eurydice is now being forced to return to contextualizes her resentment as Orpheus attempts to resurrect her.

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<sup>38</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 35.

<sup>39</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", lines 49-50.

<sup>40</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 48.

Eurydice's resentment at being followed to the underworld is additionally underpinned by her criticism of Orpheus' vain, absurd, and childish character. The tone of the poem is one of sarcasm and scorn, whereby Orpheus is regarded as childish and unable to accept the slightest criticism. She describes how the poet, "once sulked for a day and a night"<sup>41</sup>, because of a remark she made concerning his use of too many abstract nouns. The word "sulked" reveals Eurydice's criticism concerning Orpheus' childishness. Carol Ann Duffy as a result portrays a childish man being mocked by an outraged woman through the used diction. The poet also makes use of hyperbole to illustrate the extent of Orpheus' absurdity, when Eurydice, in the third stanza, lists the numerous ridiculous claims Orpheus made about himself and his work. It is stated in the blurb found on his poetry work: "that animals, / aardvark to zebra, / flocked to his side when he sang"<sup>42</sup>. Orpheus' attempt to present himself as a mystical figure is simply met with disdain from Eurydice. In addition, the personification of the rocks at his feet, who before his apparition were "sullen"<sup>43</sup> and "mute"<sup>44</sup>, whose description symbolizes Eurydice's subordinate position in relation to her husband, are said to have "wept wee, silver tears"<sup>45</sup> after Orpheus' apparition. Thus, Duffy once again utilizes hyperbole in order to create a scornful tone which reflects Eurydice's resentment. Thereafter the reader is informed that Eurydice was Orpheus' typist and is aware that the claims being made are actually "[b]ollocks."<sup>46</sup> The chosen colloquial word sharply contrasts with the exaggerated language used for the preposterous claims about Orpheus, conveying Eurydice's opposition towards him whilst heightening her frustration and resentment that he has come to claim her. In a similar manner, Mrs. Lazarus is also claimed by

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<sup>41</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 23.

<sup>42</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", lines 38-40.

<sup>43</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 43.

<sup>44</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 43.

<sup>45</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 44.

<sup>46</sup> Duffy, "Eurydice", line 45.

her husband once he is resurrected and forced into subordination. This is shown through the description of Lazarus “croaking his cuckold name”<sup>47</sup> which infers Mrs. Lazarus has committed adultery, in the eyes of the community, through the bizarre circumstances.

Eurydice’s lack of identity and inevitable instrumentalization are moreover expressed in the third and eleventh stanzas of the poem where she reveals that she “must follow him back to our life, / Eurydice, Orpheus’ wife”<sup>48</sup> . The personal pronouns chosen indicate no separation between his life and hers, illustrating the loss of individuality Eurydice experiences. Additionally, the speaker refers to her name, for the first and only time in the poem, only in conjunction with her role as a wife, which she must now unquestionably reassume if she is resurrected. In “Mrs. Lazarus”, the speaker’s loss of individuality comes as a result of the death of her husband. Both women are trapped, but Eurydice is “trapped in his images, metaphors, similes, / octaves and sextets, quatrains and couplets, / elegies, limericks, villanelles, / histories, myths...”<sup>49</sup>. The extensive list of literary devices and literary forms expresses Eurydice’s frustration, and implicitly resentment, whilst creating a suffocating effect which reflects her confining situation. Through the ellipsis at the end of the statement the entrapping nature of Eurydice’s life is further highlighted, as the poet suggests that Eurydice was subjected, in a metaphorical sense, to being trapped in numerous other literary forms and devices as Orpheus’ unwilling muse. Furthermore, the objectification forced upon Eurydice by Orpheus, for the purpose of his poetry is also illustrated as she describes him as having come with “a poem to pitch with [her] as the prize”<sup>50</sup>. Orpheus’ motives are selfish, attempting to regain access to his muse, the diction implying the dehumanization of Eurydice. Additionally, the harsh and spitting

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<sup>47</sup> Duffy, “Mrs. Lazarus”, line 40.

<sup>48</sup> Duffy, “Eurydice”, line 63.

<sup>49</sup> Duffy, “Eurydice”, lines 64-67.

<sup>50</sup> Duffy, “Eurydice”, line 33.

sound created by the use of alliteration makes Eurydice's resentment towards Orpheus heard by the reader.

## Conclusion

The focal point of the poems "Mrs. Lazarus" and "Eurydice" by Carol Ann Duffy, most prominently highlighted through imagery, tone and diction, is the emotion of resentment. Duffy explores Mrs. Lazarus' resentment initially arising due to the loss of her husband and the emotional suffering she is confronted with. Though the main source of resentment is that due to Lazarus' unnatural resurrection her intense suffering has resulted to have been in vain, she is put in the position of having committed adultery and is forced to abandon her new relationship, after a brief period of happiness, and reassume the role of wife the now repugnant Lazarus. Whilst in "Mrs. Lazarus" the emotion of resentment is explored through grief and horror, in "Eurydice" the resentful tone is one arising from frustration. The poet shows the reader that resentment can lead to feelings of disdain and a forceful revelation of the truth concerning the way a man has objectified and misrepresented a woman. Eurydice resents her childish, selfish and self-absorbed husband, who merely instrumentalizes her for his poetry and denies her the right to her own identity. Her resentment is subsequently heightened as Orpheus intrusively attempts to resurrect her, for his own selfish motives, without giving any regard to the fact that Eurydice was especially happy to be in his absence in the underworld. Through giving the reader a glimpse of the happiness that was theirs in the absence of their husbands, but that both women were robbed of, the poet further contextualizes the resentment felt by both speakers of the poems. Moreover, subordination and resentment have a clear connection in both poems as the women do not have the right to autonomy. Therefore, in answer to the question: "To what extent can the poems "Mrs. Lazarus" and "Eurydice" be considered an exploration of resentment?" it can be stated that both poems are an in-depth and extensive exploration of the emotion of resentment.

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