

The Themes of *The Little Match Girl*

The Little Match Girl is a short story by Hans Christian Andersen. It's a touching tale about a poor girl who spends New Year's Eve working on the streets, dreaming of a better life, and warming herself by lighting matches she failed to sell. Some of the main themes include loneliness, struggle, and cruelty.

The little girl's loneliness is at the center of the story. It is depicted through the images of cold winter contrasting with the protagonist's fantasy. The girl is missing the only person who loved her—her grandmother. As she lights the last match, she can see her late grandmother and somehow finds relief. As Esther Lombardi stated, the girl reminiscing the time “when she will be surrounded by love, and filled with happiness” (Lombardi).

Another theme that the author incorporated is the theme of struggle. At a very young age, the girl in the story struggles to make money to feed herself and her father. Although the girl is cold, hungry, and exhausted, she does not give up and still tries to do her job. The author also mentions that the girl could not return home without money as her father would beat her, which shows how damaging this struggle is.

Cruelty is also one of the main themes of *The Little Match Girl*. The girl in the story faces mistreatment from numerous people, including her own father. However, she does not try to fight this cruelty back. The only solution she has is to escape her cruel reality through fantasy. The author makes the readers feel for the girl and inspires them to be more considerate toward others.

Although the story is short and has a simple plot, it effectively presents its themes. Through the image of a poor little girl left alone in the snow, the author manages to evoke the reader's empathy and helps them fully grasp the issues of loneliness, struggle, and cruelty.

Works Cited

1. Lombardi, Esther. "Examination of The Little Matchstick Girl." ThoughtCo, Aug. 25, 2020, [thoughtco.com/the-little-match-girl-review-738159](https://www.thoughtco.com/the-little-match-girl-review-738159).