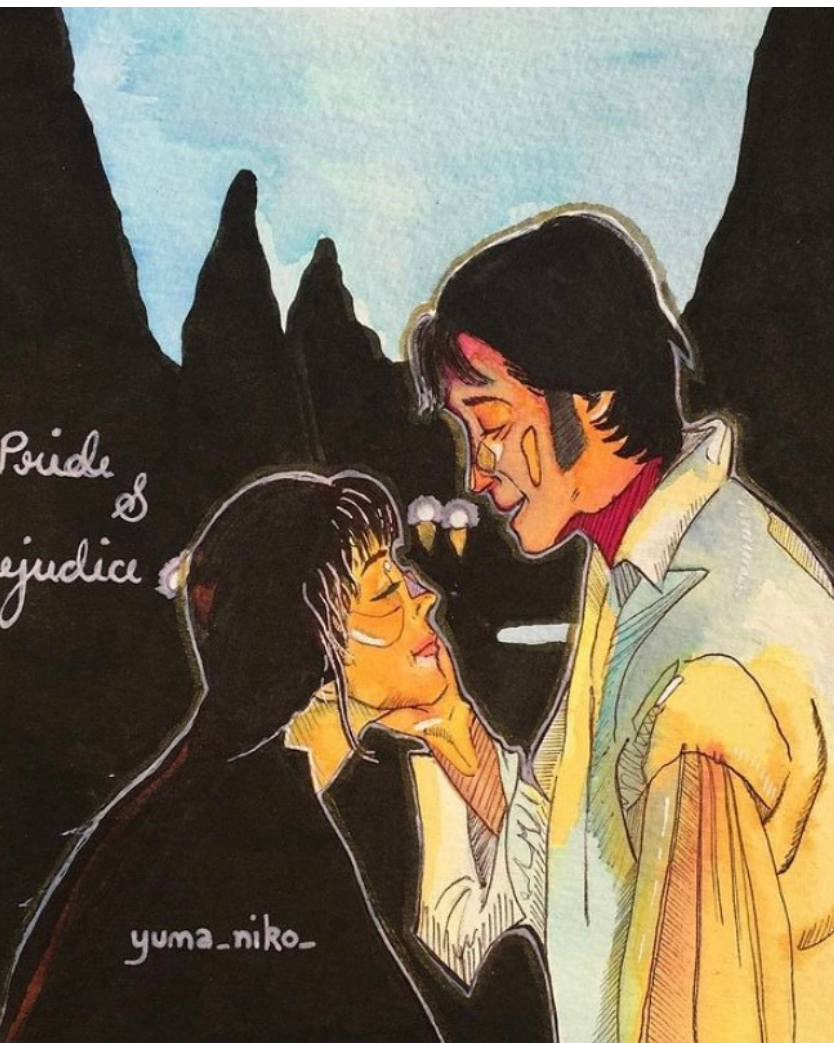


GOOD WOMEN, BAD WOMEN: *Misogyny in the Victorian Era*



By Jigisha Sharma

The Victorian era was the era followed by the Tudor era not exactly “Scott free” or as the slang of the Tudor era suggests “without any damage” either as in reference to the Victorian era and for the other consecutive eras previous to it being the Elizabeth era the birth of the renaissance movement and or the period of enlightenment, following the regency era before the queen’s reign.



The Victorian era spawned many art movements following romanticism in Europe as well as Victorian England towards the late 18th century when Beethoven drew breath from producing widely appreciated and worshiped symphonies. Romanticism, as it was, was followed by the renaissance of the Elizabeth era which succumbed to subjectivity and to an extent a reaction against the enlightenment.

To quote the poem by the English romantic poet Coleridge on the “blue flower”

‘What if you slept? And what if, in your sleep, you dreamed? And what if, in your dream, you went to heaven and there plucked a strange and beautiful flower? And what if, when you awoke, you had the flower in your hand? Ah, what then?’

Romanticism was led by the classical art movement which emerged as a result of the expansive interest in the lost civilizations of Ancient Greece about six hundred years before the birth of Christ, the period specifically when Greek culture attained its peak splendor as well as Ancient Rome

The Classical Art Movement prevailed at the same time as the plague epidemic that had encompassed 12 million people on the globe. The third plague pandemic or bubonic plague preceded Oscar Wilde's play performed for the first time as when also the origin of species by means of natural selection in the year 1859 was published by Darwin.

For the Victorian era, there were quite a lot of revelations for when Queen Victoria enthralled the United Kingdom, Great Britain, and Ireland which came to be recognized as being symbolic of femininity before which the eras that preceded those particular eras revolved around family, motherhood, and respectability, the idea that women's roles primarily in society were centric to executing chores around their respective households or appropriating domesticity.

During this time there was prominence of a clear distinction of the roles of men and women in society that began to surface, for men with the earliest phases of industrialisation as well as the more ruptured lungs and body image facilitation for women, to more explicitly suggest what were stays and or more popularly known corsets have been recognised to have a bad reputation for not just some particularly misleading rumours that spread about the same for instance the idea of ruptured lungs or surgically removing one's ribs to fit in the corset for the ideal hourglass body figures when in actual practice, corsets existed to support the often heavy weighing ball gowns weighing over 5 pounds in the particular era for corsets were made using steel stays, those ideas also allowed for certain other rumours as for the existence of faint couches to only exist for women fainting out of wearing corsets that restricted breathing which in practice wasn't the situation that arose, women wearing corsets to only normalise jeopardising their physical health is almost stark raving mad.



The production of corsets was easily available in the Victorian era for the early phase of industrialization allowed mass production and for corsets do not exist solely as being made by hand. However dismissing such rumors doesn't allow for ignorance of the plethora of ailments that were in actuality with tight corseting for the medical community did fairly condemn tight lacing as was also mentioned in 'The Lancet', one of the world's oldest medical journals that published several articles on tight lacing for the garment to some extent allows deformity in fashion when practiced for a longer period of time shows evidence for shrinking of the internal structure and accommodated constriction but for corsets in recent times seems to restrict tight lacing as outerwear it seems less hazardous for one's internal functioning. The corset could be considered as a necessary requisite measure for the Victorian women's everyday lives and even more so when it was for growing girls being tightly laced for the ideals that it was symbolic of in inclusiveness looking merely physically attractive for the fashion norms that succumbed the Victorian era. Corsets date back to 400 years of rupturing lungs and restricting internal organ functioning and that is something which might seem far-fetched for if it were as oppressive as on paper and evidence it mustn't have existed in consistent prominence forevermore.

BY JIGISHA SHARMA

