

## Compare between the two endings of the novel

A Handful of Dust is a novel written by the English novelist Evelyn Waugh. The novel depicts the changes that have taken place in the English society in the period between the two world wars. Morals, traditions and principles are disintegration. Loose behaviour and loss of morality are beginning to replace the Victorian traditions and morals. People start losing faith in everything even in God. They seem to live in a Godless world and they take Religion as a diminished thing. Evelyn Waugh tries to convey his message by writing two different endings of the novel. Each of them shows the moral disintegration after the First World War.

The first ending is after the death of Dr. Messinger who has been with Tony when the latter has gone in search of a city that still keeps the old morals and old traditions. Tony is left alone on an island, suffering from fever. Then Mr Todd finds Tony and takes him to his island where he cures Tony from fever. Mr Todd asks Tony to stay a little longer with him, but later on, he tells Tony that he is not going to leave the island and go back to England. Thus Tony lives all alone on this uncivilised island and away from his home. Whenever Tony asks Todd about going back to England, Mr Todd tells him that he is not going to leave because there is no place for a person like Tony in the savage world outside. Then, Tony dies after opening his eyes on the ugliness of the world around him. This world lacks morals and glamour. He has died after his failure in finding the city of civilization and after losing his own world with all it stands for.

After Tony's death, Brenda is going to marry Jock Grant-Menzies and they are going to live happily together in the world that lacks morals. Richard Last (Teddy), Tony's cousin who only cares about rabbits, has become the owner of Hetton which is used to be a symbol for old traditions and morals. This shows that Hetton is going to lose its glory, just like morals that are going to fade away. The death of Tony is also a sign of moral disintegration at that period of time. He is considered to be the only one to believe in old morals and traditions. He is also the only one who still loves and cares about Hetton. So, by Tony's death, old morals and traditions die too.

On the other hand, the alternative ending of the novel shows the moral disintegration but in a different way. After Tony's return from Brazil, he finds Brenda waiting for him. She feels guilty and she regrets the days she has spent with John Beaver and she asks Tony to forgive her. Tony forgives her and they return together to Hetton. Tony will even take Brenda's flat in London. He will ask Mrs. Beaver, whom he used to hate in the past, to prepare it for him on her own taste. This shows that Tony is beginning to succumb to the modern immoral civilization.

Tony has returned to England because he has failed in finding the city he has been looking for, the city that still keeps the old morals and traditions. So, he decides to cope with the new savage world and to become part of it. He tries to forget all about his past and forget about his innocence and kindness. He agrees to return to Brenda, though he knows about her love affair with John Beaver. This shows that Tony is on his way to lose his morals, principles and tradition. He is going to be just like anybody else in this world. This also proves that the modern immoral civilization wins while morality and old traditions lose.