Sinead Scott

4/9/20

QCQ#16

Quotation:

“Bev Shaw responds only with a terse shake of the head. Not your business, she seems to be saying. Menstruation, childbirth, violation and its aftermath: blood-matters; a woman's burden, women's preserve. Not for the first time, he wonders whether women would not be happier living in communities of women, accepting visits from men only when they choose. Perhaps he is wrong to think of Lucy as homosexual. Perhaps she simply prefers female company. Or perhaps that is all that lesbians are: women who have no need of men.

No wonder they are so vehement against rape, she and Helen. Rape, god of chaos and mixture, violator of seclusions. raping a virgin: more of a blow. Did they know what they were up to, those men? Had the word got around?”

Comment:

This passage comes after Lucy, David’s daughter, was raped. As David comes to terms with what happened to her, he struggles to understand rape; he clusters it in with other burdens that are often faced by women and this is made more complicated by his confusion surrounding her sexuality. What struck me about this particular passage was that he seems to think that because Lucy is a lesbian, there is something worse about the rape, as if she were a virgin. I think what disturbs me is that he does not think of how rape is itself destructive, violating and regardless of who was forced to endure it, a woman, a lesbian, a man, a virgin, it is equally terrible. It is not a matter of who it was done to but rather who committed it. David, as a character, seems to be completely uneducated on everything regarding women, gender and sex. He does not really have any sense of what it is like to be a woman, not because he is a man but because he so obviously looks down upon them; they are something to “share.” Even when it is his own daughter he comes to understand why “they are so vehement against rape,” as if it would be different should Lucy not be lesbian. I think overall, David is a rather awful person; he has a disturbing view of the world, of women and of the role they play, an example or rather embodiment of so many men (though I don’t mean this to sound as though I am “blaming” or grouping all men together but historically violence against women is not done by other women).

Question:

How does this event change David and his thinking? Does it?