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## Lamb To The Slaughter & The Possibility Of Evil: Which Protagonist Is Worse?

The short story "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl and the short story "The Possibility of Evil" show us how two female protagonists commit evil acts upon people. Which character is worse? Both authors discuss how two women commit malicious acts towards other people. However, while in Lamb to the Slaughter the main protagonist, Mary commits murder. While in the possibility of evil, the main protagonist Miss Strangeworth writes hateful letters to the people in her town. We are then shown the character's true colors yet, who is worse? I'll tell you and state my reasons for why a particular protagonist is worse than the other.

Let's begin with Adela Strangeworth. Miss Strangeworth is a 71-year-old lady with blue eyes and a little dimple by her lip. She lives on Pleasant Street and is very well known in her town, hence the fact that her grandfather built the first house on that street, and the roses her grandmother planted. Miss Strangeworth hates sloppiness, it's a big pet peeve of hers. Most people use colored paper for simple little notes and shopping lists, etc. She would use the dull stub of a pencil to write her letters and wrote in a childish block print as well. The first letter she writes is pink and she proceeds to write down, "Didn't you ever see an idiot child before? Some people just shouldn't have children should they" I believe she's referring to Don and Helen Crane's sixth-month-old baby. It's obvious that Miss Strangeworth writes her letters to people in her town because she's bored and wants to feel good about herself.

I'm now moving on to Mary Maloney. Mary is a six-month pregnant housewife, who does literally anything to please her police detective husband, Patrick Maloney. At the start of the short story, we are shown Patrick just now arriving home. Mary then takes his coat off him, makes him a drink, and is completely mesmerized by her husband. We see that Mary is much in love with him. That aside, something seems a bit off that night. Patrick has a second cup of whisky that night, the second glass with more than the first one. According to the passage, they usually go out for dinner on Thursdays. She then offers to make him some supper, but Patrick then tells Mary to sit down. She was frightened by him. He then proceeds to say that he has something to tell her. It's very possible here that he's leaving her, or he wants a divorce. Patrick tells her, "Of course I'll give you money and see you're looked after." Mary wasn't trying to accept what he had just said, she thought she had imagined the whole thing. She then says going to make dinner and goes to the freezer to get the leg of lamb. As a result of him telling her he's going out, Mary then hits him over the head with the leg of lamb heavy-handed, killing him. This then snaps her out of it and she realizes what she has done and acts quickly to get rid of the body to protect her and her baby.

Furthermore, Mary then proceeds to put the leg of lamb in the oven, which is the murder weapon. Mary then goes to the store to get peas and potatoes. She lets the grocer know that they're eating in tonight and that Mr. Maloney is too tired to eat out. When Mary returns home from the grocery store, she proceeds to call the police to tell them that she came home to find Patrick dead on the floor. The police arrive and question Mary, her alibi checks out. She then feeds the two policemen the leg of lamb. In case you didn't know, Patrick is a police officer, so therefore the policemen would be more sympathetic towards her and not be suspicious. In conclusion, the two policemen eat the murder weapon, and Mary gets away with the murder.

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In my opinion, the central theme of the two short stories is "Looks may be deceiving." I raise my question again; which character is worse? There is no doubt that Mary is far worse than Miss Strangeworth. Yes, she wrote harmful letters to her town, but Mary committed a crime. You can't really compare writing letters to murder. What Mary did was unforgiving and unacceptable. She's an absolute lunatic considering the fact that she bluntly murdered her husband. To sum it up, Mary Maloney is worse than Miss Strangeworth.