THE WOMAN THAT YOU MARRY

Read the poem and the story. How does each treat the theme of love and marriage? On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph to compare and contrast the poem and the story.

IF

If a man could live a thousand years,
When half his life had passed,
He might, by strict economy,
A fortune have amassed.

Then having gained some common-sense,
And knowledge, too, of life,
He could select the woman who
Would make him a true wife.

But as it is, man hasn’t time
To even pay his debts,
And weds to be acquainted with
The woman whom he gets.

Meeting Madeline

When I first met Madeline she wasn’t much to look at. I don’t mean that she wasn’t pretty, because she was; it was more that she was always so busy, and so in charge of a thing, and so formidable in all that she took on, and so determined, that one hardly thought of her as the kind of woman one might gaze upon for hours which, in my youth and inexperience was very much what I thought love was.

We were both veterinarians. We were colleagues, and later we were friends, and later still. . . well, there is something irresistible about a person who respects and admires you simply because of who you are; someone who has your back, no matter what. When it struck me that I was in love with Madeline, we were ankle deep in mud, helping a cow with a difficult birth. I was starting to doubt the calf would make it, but Maddie never did. She dug her boots into the mud, and once she got a grip on those tiny hooves she tugged for all she was worth. She tugged so hard, in fact that she fell right on her rear end in the mud with the calf in her lap. It was her laugh that did it—the pure, beautiful joy in that laugh—the sparkle in her eyes. I couldn’t take my eyes off of her. That was it. I knew she was the woman for me. We were married six months later.