

Extract from 'The Apple Tree' by Daphne du Maurier

It was a trick of light, perhaps, something to do with the sun coming up over the woods, that happened to catch the tree at this particular moment; but the likeness was unmistakable.

He put his razor^{noun} down on the window-ledge and stared. The tree was scraggy and of a depressing thinness, possessing none of the gnarled¹ solidity of its companions. Its few branches, growing high up on the trunk like narrow shoulders on a tall body, spread themselves in a martyred² resignation, as though chilled by the fresh morning air. The roll of wire circling the tree, and reaching to about halfway up the trunk from the base, looked like a grey tweed skirt covering lean limbs; while the topmost branch, sticking up into the air above the ones below, yet sagging slightly, could have been a drooping head poked forward in an attitude of weariness.

How often he had seen Midge stand like this, dejected³.

¹gnarled – knotted

²martyred – showing pretend or exaggerated suffering to gain sympathy

³dejected – sad, depressed

→ menacing.

semantic field

→ personification

