

Les murrays poems essay sample



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The use of poetry is made to capture some aspects of human experiences. In Les Murray's poetry he portrays aspects of human experiences in the poem "Spring Hail" as he reminisces of his childhood experiences and also the human experiences that involve sorrow in "The Widower in The Country".

Firstly, the poem 'The Widower in the Country' conveys the grief and emotions accompanying the loss of a loved one. He captures depressing emotions by using connotations of 'Widower' and 'Country' in the title. By using these connotations Murray associates the loneliness of being a widower and the seclusion of the country to enhance the sorrow of losing a loved one. Another example where Murray portrays the loneliness of this particular widower is shown in his sense of uselessness. Murray uses the first person narrative in "I'll get up soon, and leave my bed unmade. I'll go outside... I'll drive my axe..."

By using this technique and using 'I' in describing the minimal activity he does throughout the day in the poem emphasises this man's solitude and also his emotional trauma that affects his mentality and will to work. In this experience Murray, once again, demonstrates the man's emptiness through his tedious daily routine. This is reflected in the poem structure's use of overlong sentences in the first two paragraphs. "I'll go outside... now/ I'll drive my axe... and make tea." The effect of the overlong sentences is to capture the impression of the widower's prolonged days of his monotonous schedules and recurring chores whether it be chopping wood or preparing meals for himself. Murray interestingly uses the lifeless surroundings to portray the sorrow of the widower's current state. By cumulating the

landscape in: “ paddocks aching in the heat, the windless trees, the nettles in the yard..” the poet reveals the bleakness of the farm.

Moreover conveys the character’s sadness and grief is linked and is similar to the physical environment as ‘ aching’ and ‘ un-kept’. Murray also depicts the intricate nature of the widower’s loss and his grief in both good and bad memories. The metaphor of: “ bright webbed visions smeared on the dark of me thoughts” mirrors this complicated mix. The metaphors suggest that the ‘ bright webbed visions’ are his jovial memories of being with his wife and yet ‘ the dark of his thoughts’ being his grief is so great that it smears the good memories. And the lack of punctuation suggests the uncontrollable type of sadness that is seen in films. Another way Murray captures the Man’s loneliness is by the The distressing experience for the widower is reflected once more in the landscape. Murray describes his emotions by personifying the landscape in “...the Christmas paddocks aching in the heat.” In this comparison Murray presents In Murray’s poem “ Spring Hail” he reminisces about an old memory of him as a child that got caught in a hail storm with his pony. He uses onomatopoeia in: “...and then the hammering faltered.”

to allow the reader to relive his past experience of getting trapped in a hail storm. By using onomatopoeia Murray creates sensory imagery to describe his experience and to intensify the reader’s insight of his memory. Murray also depicts this early memory while he waited in a barn house whilst waiting for the storm to cease. Through the use of personification in: “... and the torn cobwebs ceased their quivering.”

Murray provokes his emotions as a boy during the storm. The effect of personifying the cobwebs mirrors to the reader of how the boy felt during the event of this particular hail storm. After the hail storm concludes Murray rejoices over the beauty and aliveness of nature of the outcome of the storm. He uses sensory imagery to emphasise the beauty and aliveness in “ Fresh minted hills smoked... the hail I scooped... crackled as we walk” By doing this, Murray portrays the extraordinary beauty of nature by visual imagery as he describes the smoking hills and also the freshness of the natural world by using the word ‘ crackled’ when he’s describing his interaction with the ice. In the process of capturing this past experience in the poem Murray expresses the boy’s interest and involvement with his surroundings. By using repetition in “ ate ice, and wandered, and ate ice” Murray portrays how the boy was overindulged in this past memory with all five senses. He was saturated in his visual and aural senses as well as what he tastes.

A differing viewpoint that is conveyed other than nature’s power that the boy witnessed, but also nature’s restorative gift. Murray makes comparison of the creek’s gentle sounds and a mother’s voice in “ the creek... moving and passing with a mothering sound”. The use of this metaphor is to emphasise the differing forces of nature being extremely unpredictable to nurturing and gentle. Constantly within “ Spring Hail” Murray encourages the reader to reminisce with him in the beauty of childhood through this third hand experience for the reader. Murray repeats the chorus: “ this is for spring and hail that you may remember a boy long ago and a pony that could fly.” And by repeating this sentence it reflects the nature of memories and how they

reappear in our mind. Not only that, but by the use of 'you' in the sentence Murray encourages the reader not to relive his memory but their own.

Murray captures the aspects of human experiences effectively whether it is the beauty of nostalgia and childhood memories or the grievous experiences of losing a loved one through the art of poetry.