

Familiar ideas of when first and desert places poems

Literature



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The common theme in the poem "When First" by Edward Thomas and "Desert Places" by Robert Frost seems to be that of isolation. In relation to this, Robert makes one of the striking claim that isolation is inevitable and that it's important for respect and mutual understanding. But Thomas major argument is that isolation is horrific and chaotic. Thomas expresses how he is about to be isolated from the hills in a way that emotional moves the reader. On the other hand, Robert gives a sense of being cut from his real world, which make his life harder than before. Most interesting is how both the poems use the nature, specifically the desert woods and hills to help us depict this theme. Robert illustrates emptiness from the reason that no human companion can be found in a desert, an isolation tone still presented by a man being isolated within the city, or the urbanized world, in the poem "When First." It's indisputable from both poems that isolation can take place in any environment, and analysis of this prospect makes the two poems even more interesting. But then again, we could not have established the common ground for our analysis if not the use of symbolism, which greatly represents the nature in both poems. Together with the imagery, these two stylistic techniques give the reader a qualified reality that every man could be caught in isolation.

Typically, Thomas symbolically uses the description of the "grass" and "tall slope" to help us understand how much important the hills were important to him. This is notable at the beginning of his poem when he expressed that he had hoped, by the first sight that the tall slopes would give him hope, he states, "When First I came here, I had hoped..." (1-2). Here the "tall slopes" symbolizes hope, which is important for helping understand his feelings after

he loses the same slopes. Later, the Thomas explained that he was about to lose the hills and that he never expects, anytime soon to see them again. This is evident from where he is stating that “ would see something no other hill” (6-7). Although the narrator may have tried to perceive the hills as if not much significant to him, we understand this was out of desperation, or perhaps words for the consolation. We can, therefore, claim that the narrator would never wish the hills to be gone forever and that he had no hopes of finding other comforting hills. Thomas is isolated to the point that he feels like the future was hidden from him... “ the future and maps, hide something I was waiting for” (19-20). The above is a tone of finality can also help us claim that Thomas had no hope of seeing the hills again. Indisputably, the author must be making a strong point that in reality we are not only isolated from the people around us but also nature. This has consequences of loneliness and psychological torture.

As earlier stated, nothing interesting more than how this theme still finds its way in the Poem “ Desert Places.” Still of interest is how nature was used to represent the separateness. For instance, the “ snow” symbolizes how narrator’s life which was covered by loneliness, and how the blanketing (separateness) was not heard or even seen. About this the narrator states, “.. a blanker whiteness of benighted snow (11-12).” Although here nature does not give the narrator hope like is in the first poem, it’s interesting how snow could be symbolically used to represent the theme. The narrator also sounds like he is unaware of what is going around him and like he has nothing to express, which greatly reflects the aspect of his loneliness. Even without much analysis, the narrator himself has directly expressed this state

of isolation by stating, “ and lonely as it is that loneliness (9-10).” But still interesting, like is in the first poem, is how the narrator sounds like he does not care about the state of loneliness. He states, “ They cannot scare me with their empty spaces (13-14).” Similarly, these are the words of desperation or perhaps, consolation considering that the author had expressed himself being too absent-spirited, to the point of not being counted. He also has stated that he feels like he has been isolated from everything, “ the woods around have it...It’s all theirs” (5-6).

Robert feels like the snow is falling fast, more especially at nights which adds the sense of isolation like is in our previous poem when the narrator expresses that he has no hopes of seeing the slopes again. The frost also symbolizes that Isolation will continue getting bigger like is in the first poem when the author states that his journey lies in the map. This is evident when Robert states, “ and lonely as it is that loneliness, it will be more that lonely ere it will be less (9-10).” But far different from the first poem, Robert lacks the human companion. But what’s most striking about this theme in this poem, is how the narrator is isolated from his environment, like it was in the first poem. Still similar to the first poem, the narrator was caught in this state (alienation) unaware.

Indisputably, the two poems must be making a strong point that a man is usually caught up in a state of alienation unwillingly and that he will always try to bring down this challenge. The underlying concept of the theme of isolation is that the narrators were caught in the barrier of separateness between man and environment. But according to frost such separation is

important for respect and mutual understanding. It's therefore not clear from Frost whether we should build up this isolation or tear it down. But for this paper, we can argue that it's appropriate to build up this separateness where necessary. Still, it can be agreed from both the poems that isolation is horrific and that it can turn chaotic. For instance, Thomas is not certain what will happen with his life after he leaves the hills. In relation to this, he expresses that the change has been very unpredictable, especially for the present year. He states, " the change, late unperceived, this year (12-13)." Still, he fears the hope has been lost... " hope has gone forever" (13).

Conclusion

Conclusively, the theme of Isolation seems predominant, both in " When First" by Edward Thomas and " Desert Places" poems as evident from the above analysis. Most interesting is how the two poems use symbolism and imagery to present this theme. The fact that the type of isolation occurring in both the poems is that of human to the environment makes it even more interesting. The underlying fact of the theme is, we are presented with this problem unaware, and though discontenting, we can use it to build our respect.