

# A analysis of langston hughes's collection of poems - allusion, dramatic monologu...

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' I, Too' by Langston Hughes is a short poem that talks about a man who is hidden from guests but later comes to be accepted. The poem was written during the period of the Harlem Renaissance; a time when writers from the black community had started rising from obscurity. The talents of African American writers and artists were beginning to be recognized and appreciated by the greater artistic community. The poem itself greatly exemplifies this period in its theme. Langston Hughes aptly uses allusion, dramatic monologue and imagery to mold the poem into an extended metaphor on overcoming oppression.

Allusion is used by many poets to point to a particular idea they want to express without directly stating it. We see allusion right from the start of the poem when the author writes, " I, too, sing America" (line 1). From this line the reader is immediately reminded of the poem by Walt Whitman, ' I hear America Singing' (Whitman & Holloway, 1942). In the poem, Whitman talks about the singing of different people in society. All these people sing their various songs, and it comes together to form a sort of a chorus that represents being American (Whitman & Holloway, 1942). Hence, when Hughes writes " I, too, sing America" he also sees himself as part of the chorus singing about being American. This allusion is meant to show that the black man is as American as everyone else and hence should not be oppressed and treated as a second class citizen.

Using dramatic monologue Hughes gives the theme of the poem a firsthand experience feel. The author uses ' I' many times throughout the poem, " But I laugh" (line 5), " I'll be ..." (line 9). The author also uses ' they' instead of a particular term as a name, " They send me ..." (line 3), and " They'll see ..."

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(line 16). These terms give the reader the sense that the author is speaking of their plight hence giving more credibility to the message. The reader can empathize with the person as they overcome their obstacles to rise to be equal with their oppressor, " I'll be at the table" (line 9).

There is a lot of metaphor and imagery throughout the poem that help to shape its theme. The author uses the first person ' I ' in the poem. The ' I ' does not represent the author himself but can be interpreted to represent a larger grouping of people. " I am the darker brother" (line 2), darker here represents the African American community and not evil, as in dark soul. " Tomorrow" (line 8) is a metaphor for the future, a hopeful future where all people will be equal. " They'll see how beautiful I am" (line 16), here the author is not talking about physical beauty but the inner beauty such as talent, skills, humanity. " They send me to eat in the Kitchen" (line 3), this line reminds the reader of the times of slavery when the black man was not allowed to share anything with the white man including toilets and roads. The use of imagery in the poem shows the reader that the black man in the oppressed party but he has hope that one day he will overcome the oppression and sit as an equal to the white man.

Langston uses his literary skills to mold the poem to give encouragement to anyone that no matter how oppressed they are, eventually their beauty will shine through and they will rise above. The reader is shown how even when the oppressor may see you as worthless, they should bide their time and improve themselves for their opportunity to shine will come. The author's

mastery of poetic elements gives the poem a firm foot on which to become the pillar of a whole community.