

Hawk roosting by ted hughes



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Hawk roosting The poem " Hawk Roosting" written by Ted Hughes is presented as a dramatic monologue, in which the hawk is the speaker. It is an individual utterance, where the hawk starts the poem with the pronoun " I". This particular start gives the readers an idea about the poem persona who has a powerful ego but who is at the same time manifesting his identity which stands firm and strong in the poem. The hawk consequently shows its ruling power and dominance by stating " I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.

This verse is quite metaphorical as it shows the supremacy of the hawk who occupies the highest place in the wood Just like a king in his palace. It also connotes that the hawk has an overconfident attitude in itself, as the " eyes closed" proves that the bird do not feel endangered or threatened by any predator. This brings forward the theme of arrogance that prevails all over the poem. " Inaction, no falsifying dream" " Between my hooked head and hooked feet" this adds upon the fact that the bird keeps showing his power by giving a physical description of itself, to add a realistic touch to its utterance.

Therefore, personifying the hawk as being ferocious beast whose Job is to kill and eat. This gives a crude image of a carnivorous being that even in his sleep is performing perfect kills and eat. Simultaneously, in stanza two the hawk propagates the idea of his omnipotence by showing the collaboration of Nature with it " the high trees! " , " Air's buoyancy and the sun's ray' " Are an advantage to me;". Here, it can be noted that Nature is used as a symbolism to how the foolishness of ordinary beings who tries to compare their finite body to the infinite cycle of nature.

The symbolism of nature can be said is presented as an irony, where the hawk is supposedly thinking that nature is an advantage to it but is ignoring the concrete fact that nature is unpredictable and uncontrollable. Eventually, the hawk is personified as the embodiment of arrogance and vanity, especially to create a sensation of fear and tension. This brings a flow and vividness in the poem. Furthermore, the hawk repels the “ Grandeur” of nature by placing itself period to the earth that has to look upwards to see the hawk “ And the earth’s face upward for my inspection. By this, the hawk times and again metaphorically promotes his arrogance and power through his utterance. The poet might use this verse to convey subjective truths that just like the hawk, even the human society is blinded by arrogance. As, formerly human beings tried to show their superiority in the mastering the knowledge of construction by building the “ Tower of Babel “ in order to have direct communication with God. This act of human arrogance has lead to a multilingual society.

This is only to prove that in the end just like the human society suffered a division in the same way the hawks arrogance will have a bad ending. Moreover, the poet uses “ imagery’ as a theme rather than a technical device in this poem as the hawk imagines itself to be the cause of creation “ Now, I hold creation in my foot.... ” This misconception or deliberate thinking of the hawk that now it predominates upon arouses the tension hopes and fear which contribute in the feet”, “ ... Y each feather” to show the hawks possessiveness and predominance upon everything.

The poet makes use of alliteration in stanza one and stanza three with the hard “ k” sound “ hooked”, “ locked” and “ bark”. Which creates a harsh

feeling but it adds to the visual impact of the poem. Hence, the arrogant utterance of the hawk circulates all over the poem articulating the self-focused identity that he possesses. However, another interesting aspect of this poem is the static quality of focusing on the hawk's dominance which has a particular command in every stanza. This allows the poem to have a promising continuity- " I kill where I please because it is all mine. The numerous repetition of the word " I" brings out the self-centeredness of the hawk, who is free from any social or moral laws. This makes it feel supernaturally powerful and it eventually maintains the theme of power in the poem. Hughes has used a specific pictorial effect of " savage" life which he supports fully with the pertinent word " sophistry" to depict the perfect image of savagery animal life that do not possess any reasoning power to decide between the right and wrong.

Therefore, the perfect selection of words enhances the visual impact and also encompasses largely into the better understanding of the poem. In close connection to that the last line of stanza four " my manners are tearing off heads..... " Heavily invest to the theme of Machiavellian which emits an unsentimental and grotesque attitude that the hawk possesses. Hughes deliberately subvert the traditional nature poems, as the verse ". Allotment of death" is an ironic Juxtaposition as no one would ever want to receive this type of gift or treatment.

It is also an exaggeration on the part of the poet to make such declarative statement for the hawk as if he is the lord of death. Secondly, the use of metaphor of the bird flying " through the bones of the living " is an uneasy juxtaposition as the bones of dead living beings builds up an inadequate

effect of sufferance, which make the hawk appear over powerful. " No arguments assert my right.... " This verse is the most striking one in the poem as it shows the great potentiality of the bird that nothing can control him, fostering the dictatorship element present in him.

On an ending note, the hawk declares that the sun is behind him to show his superiority and supremacy; as if the sun lives under his control. It is quite ironical as the hawk is again underestimating the power of nature. In addition to that, the bird claims " nothing has changed since I began" this denotes that everything undergoes change but the hawk did not want to see those changes, in order to live in his own illusionary world for its own comfort. This might be so, because the hawk knows well that with time, his body is undergoing changes.