

Interpretation of the poem "bereft" essay sample



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This analysis includes Lexical level, Grammatical level, and Schemes and Tropes. “ Bereft” is one of the famous poems of Robert Frost who was an American poet. It is often interpreted as a poem talking about the isolation and forlornness of the poet. The years of his youth are long gone. This loneliness has made him conceive the nature malevolent towards him. He is going through internal conflict and feels deserted but does not lose hope and believes in God. My goal in this paper is to interpret this theme with the help of stylistic analysis.

According to Wales:

“ The goal of most stylistic studies is to show how a text ‘ works’: but not simply to describe the formal features of texts but in order to show their functional significance; or in order to relate literary effects to linguistic ‘ triggers’ where these are felt to be relevant” (400).

On the lexical level, multiple words foreground the motif of the poem. The poet’s relinquishment can be seen in different words like “ Alone.” This lexeme has been used twice in this poem:

“ Word I was in the house alone” (Line 13).

At another point, the poet writes: “ Word I was in my life alone” (15). In the same way, the adversity and astringency of nature can be seen in these lines:

Leaves got up in a coil and hissed,
Blindly struck at my knee and missed.
Something sinister in the tone
Told me my secret must be known. (9-12)

In the above lines, words and phrases like “ hissed, struck at my knee and sinister” are showing the aversion and antagonism of nature towards him. The last word of the poem is “ but God,” due to which the theme of the whole poem is reversed. It shows his faith and belief in God that no matter what, God will always be with him.

Tropes and schemes have also been used to help the reader understand the gist of the poem. Robert Frost writes: “ Word I had left no one but God” (16). This use of Antithesis here suggests that even though the poet is deserted, nonetheless, he has faith in God. Leaves are personified into a snake to show the hostility of nature. The poet says: “ Leaves got up in a coil and hissed” (9). The word “ hissed” is indicating a snake, used as a metaphor for the aggressive leaves. The melancholic tone of the poem also helps the reader to see the poet’s grief and dolefulness.

On the Grammatical level, the use of question mark shows the poet’s inner conflict. He is baffled and perplexed. This confusion is expressed in these lines: “ Where had I heard this wind before / Change like this to a deeper roar?” (1-2). Colon is used when the poet talks about his isolation. “ Told me my secret must be known: / Word I was in the house alone” (12-13). Here it is evident that the poet is trying to signify that he is not alone in the house but the world.

To sum up, we can see how stylistic analysis helps in interpreting and comprehending a poem. Moreover, the words, imagery, style, diction, metaphors, and personification contribute to making an aesthetic appeal and depict the scenario powerfully.

Works Cited

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