

Analysis of a poem uphill by christina rossetti

Literature



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Angela Wigger Rosebrough English Comp II October 5, 2012 Explication Essay "Uphill" written by Christina Rossetti, this poem is explaining life as a journey and life's unavoidable death. This poem tells the reader that no matter what we face in life there is going to be hard times that we must endure. Life's road will never be easy and no matter how we choose to live our life, death is the ultimate price we must pay. We must try to live life the best we know how so that in the end we will find comfort in our resting place. Rossetti sets the tone of this poem as conversational.

A question is asked by her and someone then answers her. This pattern is used throughout the entire poem. Four stanzas are used, two questions are asked and two answers are given. The rhythm of this poem gives the reader the feel as if they were climbing "uphill". The rhythm used is ABAB. The meter used in this poem gives the reader a feeling of pacing steps as if they were climbing. There is an alternating pattern of five stresses per line (pentameter) then three stresses per line (trimeter). "Uphill" starts by asking a question "Does the road wind uphill all the way? Rossetti is simply asking if life's journey is uphill. Then in the second line someone answers her back saying, "Yes, to the very end." This gives the reader a feeling of sadness, thinking that life will be a long journey with many challenges ahead. In line three and four there is another question with an answer. "Will the journey take the whole day long?"(3)/ "From morn to night, my friend."(4) The words in these four lines continue to give the reader a feeling of uneasiness. They are telling the reader that life is difficult and will be long.

As we come to the second stanza Rossetti begins to ask questions about the challenges that may be faced as the journey is travelled. In line five "But is

there for a night a resting place? ” Then in line six is answered “ A roof for when the slow dark hours begin. ” In line five Rossetti is asking if there will be place to rest at the end of her journey of life. The response is yes there will be a roof where you will find a sort of peace. In line seven Rossetti is asking how she will be able to find this place, “ May not the darkness hide it from my face? ” The author is hoping she will find this place.

The answer in line eight reassures her that she will find the place, “ You cannot miss that inn. ” By the end of line eight the reader can assume that there is an end to the journey, some place, somewhere the reader believes in when the end of life comes. As the reader continues to read lines nine and ten, we see that the author is asking questions about ones who have travelled this long road before. The question asked is, “ Shall I meet other wayfarers at night? ” Is then answered with, “ Those who have gone before. ” This answer tells her that the ones who have travelled this road will be there waiting in the end.

As we read line eleven the question is returned back to the subject of the “ inn”. “ Then must I knock, or call when just in sight? ” Again this question makes the reader think about the end of the journey. “ They will not keep you standing at that door. ” The answer lets her know that the travelers that have past will not leave her there, they will take her in. In the fourth stanza the reader sees the true question being asked. The author finally asks the main question, “ Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak? ” This question is asked to find out if in the end she is going to end up where she should be.

She wants to know if this place is going to be comfortable for her or if she will even like it there. Line fourteen gives her the answer, “ Of labor you shall

find the sum. " This answer is telling her that depending on the way she lives her life is going to determine how comfortable she will be. The last lines of the poem the author is trying to bring back her original question of comfort by asking, " Will there be beds for me and all who seek? " The answer she receives is, simply, " Yea, beds for all who come. " As the reader comes to the end of this poem, we wonder, who is answering these questions.

Is it someone who has travelled this road before? Rossetti left this question for the reader to answer for themselves. Whatever entity we choose it to be. Whether it be God, or Jesus, or whatever the reader believes in. Rossetti writes this poem with very simple rhythm and conversation. This is her view of life's journey, with all the challenges we face, in the end hopefully peace and comfort will be found. UPHILL by: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Does the road wind up-hill all the way? Yes, to the very end. Will the day's journey take the whole long day? From morn to night, my friend. But is there for the night a resting-place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin. May not the darkness hide it from my face? You cannot miss that inn. Shall I meet other wayfarers at night? Those who have gone before. Then must I knock, or call when just in sight? They will not keep you standing at that door. Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak? Of labor you shall find the sum. Will there be beds for me and all who seek? Yea, beds for all who come. Work Cited Kennedy, X. J. , and Dana Gioia. Backpack literature: an introduction to fiction, poetry, drama, and writing. 4th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2012. Print. MLA formatting by BibMe. org.