

# Explicate "the sick rose" essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Explicate "The Sick Rose." What clues indicate that this is poem about the awakening of human sexuality? William Blake's poem, "The Sick Rose," depicts the awakening of the human sexuality through the use of metaphors. In the poem, the Rose symbolizes a woman. It also symbolizes the love and beauty commonly associated with a female. However, in the context of sexuality, the rose specifically represents a woman's vagina or her virginity. As stated in the poem, the rose's life is destroyed which possibly symbolizes that On the other hand, the worm symbolizes a male.

It may also represent a male's sexual organ in the context of sexuality. However, in the poem's case, the worm also symbolizes the "dark secret love" that it brings to the rose or the woman. In other words, while the creature symbolizes love, it also causes shame or pain to the rose or the woman by causing it to rot and die, which is what most worms do to flowers and plants. The poem illustrates the awakening of human sexuality in the sense that the rose, which symbolizes the woman, loses its innocence or its virginity and becomes sick because of the worm, which symbolizes the man. The man secretly crept onto the woman's bed and makes her experience sex for the first time. Other clues in the poem that support this interpretation are the words, "the invisible worm," "in the howling storm," (Blake, 2008) and "bed of crimson joy" (Blake, 2008).

In the poem it was depicted that worm, which was invisibly, secretly crept into rose in the night during a storm. The worm or the man is invisible simply because his actions and intentions toward the rose or the woman are secret. The howling storm possibly represents the night when the rose allowed the worm to experience its crimson joy or allowed sexual intercourse, which

further indicates that the rose or the woman in the poem is a virgin.

Furthermore, the howling storm could represent the passion of the worm for the rose or the man for the woman.

However, this passion is destructive in nature as it causes the rose to rot and become ill. In short, even though the woman, in the form of the rose, experienced a sexual awakening, she is unaware that she became sick.

Moreover, the rose's sickness is not necessarily a physical ailment but rather an issue of morality. In the poem, the speaker was telling the rose that it is sick because she allowed the expression of her crimson joy. The rose or the woman becomes sick in the sense that because it secretly allowed the worm into its bed even though she is not supposed to do so. As a result, the image of innocence and purity of the woman is forever tainted in the eyes of other people, making her sick.

It could then be deduced that the poem does not only indicate an awakening of human sexuality but also the effects of sexual taboos. Initially, it could be assumed that the worm or the man forced himself onto the rose or the woman. However, the sexual intercourse was not forced onto the rose at all. The fact that the worm had to be invisible or in this case, illegal, means that the woman was well aware of the consequences and had the option to refuse the worm or the man. But as shown in the poem, when the worm finally finds the rose's bed of crimson joy, she allowed him into her, which means that it is her forbidden sexual acts that cause her sickness and not necessarily the worm.

The worm only acted as an instrument or a temptation which the woman can choose to accept or refuse. In her desire for sexual awakening, the woman chose to accept the man and unknowingly becomes sick. References Blake, W. (2008). The Sick Rose. About.

com. Retrieved September 24, 2008 from [http://quotations. about. com/cs/poemlyrics/a/The\\_Sick\\_Rose. htm](http://quotations.about.com/cs/poemlyrics/a/The_Sick_Rose.htm).