

William shakespeare and william butler yeats



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Love is a common theme in poetry and it has been written about for hundreds of years. Two of the most famous poets in history are William Shakespeare and W. B. Yeats. Both of these poets used the love theme very often in their poems. William Shakespeare was born in 1564 and died in 1616. He was from Stratford, Upon Avon and was famous for writing plays. William Shakespeare was a world-renowned playwright. He wrote the famous play ' Macbeth' and is still performed hundreds of years later. Shakespeare had written most of his poems before 1600. This was a period of change when people living in medieval times developed into modern times.

He wrote mainly about love and nature and his poetry was very subjective and contained very deep feelings. W. B. Yeats was born in 1865 and died in 1939. He was always a poet. He was a protestant man from Dublin and was a nationalist. Yeats tended to use Irish mythology in his poems. He was a shy man who fell in love with a lady called Maud Gonne. He asked her to marry him on several occasions but she refused. Instead she married a man called Major John McBride. Yeats' poems are very carefully crafted and his love poems more to do with longing than fulfilment. His poetry often relates back to Maud Gonne.

He was devastated that she would not marry him and she said if she did Ireland would lose their best poet. One of these very original yet very deep and meaningful poems by William Shakespeare is, " Farewell! Thou art too dear for my possessing. " This poem shows Shakespeare's true feeling about love and how it can lead to many other emotions. He speaks about how he is not worthy to have this woman and how he is confused to why she is with

him, " Thou art too dear for my possessing. " On the other hand he subtly implies that this woman is very vain and she is very self-centred.

This uncertainty of what Shakespeare actually means adds to the poem and makes it much more interesting. So early on in the poem we can see that he wants to end the relationship because of this woman's vanity but on the other hand is having doubts whether or not to let her go. Throughout the poem it mentions how he has never deserved such a beautiful woman and that because of this he must end their relationship, " My bonds in thee are all determinate. " Shakespeare throughout the poem has cunningly used poetic devices to stress feelings inside him.

Firstly the title straight away explains to the reader that he wishes to leave her because he feels she is too good for him. The poem is in sonnet form, which is very original and is not very long. Also all lines are of approximately the same length creating a regular pattern. The rhythm of the poem, in my opinion, is quite slow because at the end of a lot of lines there are full stops and question marks. This in a way breaks up the regular rhythm of the poem and slows it down. There are obvious endings to each line and obvious rhyme.

Nearly all lines end in '-ing', which is repetitive and monotonous and makes the tone of the poem, in a way of anger and uncertainty. This has been done purposely because the boring sound brings out the writer's true feelings and illustrates to the reader just how the writer feels inside. When read out loud the reader can clearly hear how the writer brings this fury and anger out. So a very obvious rhyming scheme is present. Alliteration is smartly used, " So

thy great gift, upon misprison growing. ” The alliteration of the words “ great gift” stresses the writer’s intended emotion of sarcasm.

By using alliteration here he shows how she isn’t really all that important to him but by using sarcasm it seems to sink into the reader even more. Similes are also used to show the reader how unreal the whole situation is, “ Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter. ” The reference to dreams implies just how lucky the writer is feeling and how he feels this is all a dream. Overall the poem has a very sarcastic tone. The speaker is clearly angry towards this woman and by using sarcasm his anger is stressed more as he sound more hating towards her. The impact of this poem this poem is very strong and definite.

There is a very strong theme of love and wanting in the poem yet the poem ends on quite a negative tone, “ In sleep a king, but, waking no such matter. ” There is definitely an annoyance portrayed by the writer. The poem makes me feel that the writer is in a way stupid for letting this woman go. Clearly she is beautiful and he loves her so I see no reason why he should try and make this work. There is though a coldness implied by his language and her conceitedness. This can explain then, the uncertainty of the writer and also explain his feelings and situation.

He is trying to bring across his true feelings but the negative aspects and tone of the poem is making him unsure. The words, “ Gift and “ Riches” give reference to money. This comparison between the money and the woman give a sense of negativity. The metallic, cold and lifelessness is compared to this woman making it seem like she is not good for him. These suggestions

are powerful and have a great affect on the reader. Another powerful poem by William Shakespeare is “ Shall I compare thee to a summers day? ” This poem, I feel is the more emotional poem of the two.

It shows more emotions like joy and happiness and has a positive tone. This poem compares the lady to the natural world, “ Thou art more lovely and more temperate. ” In this sonnet the visual image of this woman is described as being more lovely and temperate than a summer’s day. At this period in time it was unusual to praise humanity over nature but this is what makes Shakespeare’s writing so much more interesting. This poem is about the writer’s true feelings about a certain woman and could possibly be referring to the same woman as in “ Farewell! Thou art too dear for my possessing.

The title of the poem suggests a feeling of great pleasure and also demonstrates Shakespeare’s love for this woman by comparing her favourably to nature. There is a very obvious rhyming pattern and at the end a rhyming couplet is used to leave the reader thinking after they have finished reading the poem. Also there is a very definite rhythm to the poem and it is quite fast paced. There are no full stops, just one long continuing sentence making the poem flow and giving it a steady beat. When read at first the poem seems quite simple and the main points are brought across but if read between the lines it is more complex.

Great diction is used to describe the woman’s beauty, “ Fair from fair”. This helps to emphasise this woman’s beauty. I feel that there is a positive tone to this poem, a tone of praise and relaxation. Also great references are made to the good looks of this woman, “ Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st.

” Overall the impact of this poem is relaxing and warming. It did not shock or surprise but praised and complimented this woman. It was calm and soothing. In my opinion the positive tone of the poem has more of a lasting and likable affect than a tone of negativity. The poem also has a very strong and definite ending.

It means that as long as his poem is still in existence so will her beauties, “ So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. ” Another great poet is W. B. Yeats. His poems are very well written and most of his love poems are to do with longing rather than fulfilment. Often his poems are very wistful and dreamy. One excellent poem by Yeats is, “ The song of wondering Aengus. ” Straight away from the title we can see that already Yeats talks about “ Aengus” a Celtic god, which illustrates to us how he speaks of things that are not real. So before even reading the poem the reader has a sense of mystery and magic.

The poem is more is more about longing and wanting this woman than actually having her. I think that W. B. Yeats is talking about Maud Gonne in this poem. In comparison to Shakespeare’s poems this poem is very long. In the poem Yeats speaks of nature and dreams. He talks of how a “ glimmering girl” appears and calls out his name. He then tells us how she disappears and how he will find her which is closely compared to his real life situation. Each stage in the poem is rather like a long sentence with only one full stop being at the end. So there is quite a fast, steady flow throughout the poem.

There is also a very obvious rhyme scheme with the line endings rhyming regularly at the end of each line. Alliteration is also used effectively, " When white moths were on the wing. " This is to indicate to the reader that these parts of the poem are very special and that their importance is stressed by the writer's use of alliteration. Lots of vivid images of fire and apple blossom are used to create a picture inside the head of the reader. This makes the reader feel more tuned into the poetry, " It had become a glimmering girl with apple blossom in her hair. " The language of the poem is a mixture of positive and negative things.

The poem starts off very positive speaking of, " Hazel Wood" which has magical properties and also speaking of animals such as, " Moths" and " silver trout". Then towards the end a tone of shock and surprise, " Though I am old and wandering. " Furthermore words like " I" and " My" are frequently used which gives a very personal touch to the poem. The use of nature is a very important aspect in the poem with references to, " long dappled grass", " sun and moon" and " hollow and hilly lands. "

Metaphors are used effectively in the poem and give a clear idea of feelings going on in the writer's head, " A fire was in my head. By using this metaphor I feel that it communicates pain effectively. Overall there is a very shadowy and vague impact on the reader. Vivid images are used throughout the poem, " Moth-like stars flickering out. " This makes me feel like I am there with nature and makes the feel calm. I feel the writer is trying to get across his warmth and subtle feelings towards Maud Gonne. He is linking this poem to real life because he knows Maud Gonne will never have him and this is why he writes, " Who called me by my name and ran. " This is tantalising

and in my opinion the poem is trying to express happenings in the writer's life at that time.

The language is very carefully written with both positive and negative aspects to the poem. The poem starts on a positive tone with colourful, bright images used. Then the poem gets serious, " I will find out where she has gone. " This is a very serious tone and describes the feelings of the writers and showing just how much he desires the woman, Maud Gonne. So by this part of the poem it is very positive and genuine and leaves the reader feeling positive too, " Silver apples of the moon and golden apples of the Sun. " these colours give a positive feel to this part of the poem and leaves the reader on a happy note.

The word, " And" is repeated over and over again especially at the start of each line. This use of repetition gives a feeling of determination and a steady rhythm to the poem. By rhyming at the end of each line, I feel the magical things of the poem are brought out more and help to create a sense of mystery and rhythm, " And pluck till time are done, The silver apples of the moon and golden apples of the sun. " Yet another great poem by W. B. Yeats is " When you are old. " This is I feel is a very dreamy poem written by Yeats just like the last poem.

Yeats speaks of Maud Gonne but this time she is, " Old and grey and full of sleep. " This is very original and because it is different this is why it has last so long. The title of the poem is very eye catching. It is very simple yet effective. Imagery is made of great use. The title creates an image of a woman who is old and grey, who sits by the fire reading a book. This is an

indication of how Maud Gonne when she is old may sit by the fire and read a book by Yeats and realise how much she really meant to him.

Nature again is mentioned giving images of, " Mountains overhead" and " Amid a crowd of stars. Again this is very slow and steady paced with the poem being one continuing sentence. In my opinion it sounds like Yeats has come to terms with not being able to have Maud Gonne. He is also trying to warn her not to miss her chance, which I feel is very clever by Yeats. Great diction is used with words like " Murmur" giving a tone of Negativity and " Slowly" giving a tone of nostalgia. Repetition is also fully made use of the word " Love" being repeated over and over which keeps the reader informed that love is at the heart of this poem.

He also speaks of himself in the poem and how he loves her differently from other people because he loves her soul, " And loved your beauty with love false or true, but one man loved the pilgrim soul in you. " I think this is a cunning attempt to try and get Maud Gonne by Yeats. It is a way of telling her that his love goes deeper than any other mans and that one day she will realise this. Also Yeats makes excellent use of personification in the poem. He personifies love making it seem like a person. He says, " Love fled. " So again we see a feeling of rejection and negativity.

I feel that the last line of the poem, " Hid his face" also gives a negative aspect of how he is feeling pain and torment. In conclusion, I feel that between the two poets I discussed W. B. Yeats is the better poet. His originality of the theme " love" was used to great effect and although he didn't succeed in finding love, he wrote very positively and clearly about it

and expressed his desires and feelings for it. He used nature and Irish mythology to express his feelings, which was very unique. I preferred the poem, “ When you are old. ” This in my opinion was the most original and strongest poem of them all.

He wrote from a very unusual angle of the woman he loved: when she was old and how she will remember him in years to come. Also the repetition of the word “ Love” in his poems stresses the true feelings about love inside him and his true emotions for Maud Gonne. W. B. Yeats wrote very unreal and dreamy poetry. Use of nature to describe both positive and negative emotions is excellent. In my opinion I feel that love poetry communicates the emotions very realistically and also you can get an in depth view of what kind of a person the poet is.