

Irony and tone in the poem, desert places

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' Desert Places' by Robert Frost starts off with his signature metaphor of a snowy evening and tells of a narrative poem told in first person. Not unlike many of his other poems like ' Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' the setting of the poem is very keen on its entirety and description of the place lets the reader into a sense of empathy of not only what the persona sees but also on how he feels. Already by the second stanza, it is reinforced that the outlook is very dim and one of absolute loneliness which first started off as indistinct to him. It consumes the reader of a deep feeling of being alone in so much that one is torn not only with fear but of a deep-seated solitude as evidently divulged. It is a short but intense poem that uses the imagery of the surrounding of the persona as a metaphor to the emotions that it conveys. Unlike the holiday and cheerful spirit usually associated with winter, snow relatively relates to sadness in the poems of Robert Frost. Although there is the recognition of something sublime in snow, " And the ground almost covered smooth in snow" (Frost line 3), sorrow envelops the persona of the poem. The tone of the poem is very despondent of his surrounding as he continues on his journey. This is repeated a number of times to ensure its impact, thus, " And lonely as it is, that loneliness/ Will be more lonely ere it will be less" (Frost 9-10). The irony is seen strongest in the characterization of white snow but giving it a sense of something fearful. The contrast of the conception over the feeling indicates its poetic irony. This is also indicative in the significant final line, " To scare myself with my own desert places" (Frost line 16), because this is the irony of the realization that deep within he has the loneliness that is not far in contrast to what is actually visible to him. The setting is an important part due mainly to its impact in the poem. The loneliness that engulfs the persona of the poem is <https://assignbuster.com/irony-and-tone-in-the-poem-desert-places/>

the most tragic element as there is an internal realization of a searing sadness that is perhaps his own making or one that could not help. This scares him conceivably far more because he recognizes his existence but there is nothing that could be done except to live in it. " They cannot scare me with their empty spaces/ Between stars - on stars where no human race is" (Frost line 13-14), these lines to me are poignant in such a way that it is as though he is attempting to make himself look capable of handling his isolation but there is that fear that will never elude him. The strength of the poem lies in engaging the reader to feel that loneliness through the metaphors found in the setting. Bibliography Frost, Robert. " Desert Places." PoetHunter. org. 2004. Classic Poetry Series. 15 June 2011. <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/desert-places/>