

Meaning of the poem essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Symbolism](#)



Analysis of the poem “ To His Coy Mistress” By: Andrew Marvell

The poem “ To His Coy Mistress” By: Andrew Marvell is a lyrical poem. It can also be classified as a metaphysical poem which is a brief, intense meditations employing wit, irony and elaborate comparisons. The speaker is requesting that the coy lady yield to hi passion. The poem is split into three radical parts. The first stanza describes the writer’s great feelings of love for a young lady. The second stanza shows how time is fading very fast by using words like “ fading of beauty and death.” The third stanza presses the question to the mistress whether she will accept the writer’ plea for love. There is a set of rhymes used to throughout the poem to ensure that it flows smoothly.

The speaker in the poem addresses a woman who is not willing to respond to his sexual advances. He urges the woman to comply by arguing that if they love each other with passion then they will get the best out of the short life they have to live. The speaker describes to the lady how he would love her if the woman gave him her time. He says that he would spend centuries just admiring each part of the lady’s body. The writer goes ahead to tell the lady that her refusal to conform to the writer’s plea will not put him off but he says that he will press harder. The writer tries to convince the woman by giving an impression of how human life is and tell the lady that it is an opportunity that strikes only once and therefore should be enjoyed fully.

The poem focuses on the following:

The poem has startling comparisons or contrast. In this poem, Marvel uses a waggish metaphor to compare love and vegetable. (Line 11)

Mockery: The writer uses shocking mockery to bring about some meaning in the poem. In line 27 and 28 he says that “ then worms shall try... that long preserved virgin.” This is a very strong sense of crude mockery to the ‘ mistress.’

Gross exaggeration: This can also be called hyperbole. For instance in line 15 he writes “ two hundred years to adore each breast.” This is a good example of exaggeration in the poem.

Nuances

A nuance is a subtle degree of difference in meaning, feeling or tone in a poem. Andrew Marvell also employs the use of nuance his poem “ To His Coy Mistress” This is evident in the following ways:

a) The title: “ Coy mistress”

Mistress means a woman who can be either married or not having an affair with a married man. In this sense the term affair means having sex. Mistress could also be used to mean a woman who acts as a patron or sponsor for an artist or artists. In this sense we can say that if the speaker used the name mistress to mean a patron then he could be asking for her sponsorship in something like a new project actually to give him money. However, the poem is precisely talking about sex and if we have to use the second meaning of mistress then the speaker could be using sex as a metaphor for money.

Coy means that a person is shy, quiet and reserved or is pretending to be so. Therefore using the term coy in the title implies that the speaker’s mistress

is just trying to pretend not to want to have sex with the speaker while in real sense she may be in need of it. This can be confirmed when the speaker says that coyness is a crime. Coy can also mean to caress.

Therefore tying the mistress and coy can have two or more different meanings and this give us the way the writer uses the title to bring about the aspect of nuance in the poem.

Contributing factors to its theme

Theme

The main them of the poem is “ seize the day” there are several factors that have contributed towards the theme of the poem and they include:

Presentation: Sex is a major theme in the poem “ To His Coy Mistress.” The theme of sex is found throughout the poem. This theme happens in a variety of hypothetical situations. The speaker portrays sex as a very important necessity and he makes it to appear as if all his problems will be brought to rest if his desire for sex is properly taken care of. Getting the speaker’s mood in the poem can be very hard as the main theme “ sex” can be both serious and absurd which leads to pain and pleasure respectively. So it is very hard to determine whether the speaker is serious or he is just joking.

Metaphors and imagery: The writer has used several metaphors and images to bring about the major theme of the poem.

Symbolism

The writer also used several cases of symbolism in the poem to bring about his idea and for easy understanding. Use of symbolism is very important

when writing a poem as it helps in developing an attitude in the poem.

Symbolism helps the reader to interpret more about the poem as they make their own conclusions. Symbolism also helps the reader to understand the poem more. In the poem “ To His Coy Mistress,” the writer uses symbols to reveal his attitude toward his mistress. The speaker professes his love by saying, “ Had we but world enough, and time...” (Line1). Another instance when symbolism is used in the poem is the title “ To His Coy Mistress, “ which is an apostrophe. It shows the reader actually what the poem is going to be about. The second line “ This coyness, lady, were no crime...” is also another instance of symbolism to show that the lady is committing a crime by not accepting his requests. There are some lines which have been used to symbolize wasting of time. They include: “ A hundred years should go to praise / Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze; / Two hundred to adore each breast, / But thirty thousand to the rest; / An age at least to every part” (adopted from the poem “ To His Coy Mistress,”)

Overall effect of the poem

The poem talks about the man who was so much into a lady he addresses as a mistress. He portrays her importance and how her falling for him could impact his life. From reading the poem, we can surely ascertain that men can sometimes be blind folded with their desire for sex. By using the language of polite love, the speaker warns the lady of the way time passes very fast and the immense of death. The poem gives us an impression that life is very short and should be enjoyed fully when we are still living.

Work cited list

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