

The first born



The title of this poem is “ The First Born”. The poem is set in Australia today. The speaker in the poem, is the Land, which is distressed and frantically searching for her “ first born”, the indigenous Australians who are in a bad condition. The Land continues searching for her “ first born” and asks “ you whom I bore after” which is the white people what had become of the indigenous Australians. The white people were silent and did not reply. An important idea in this poem is the relationship between the indigenous Australians and the white people. The poet seems to express to readers that the indigenous Australian are in a bad condition. Another idea is that all human beings regardless of race are equal and part of the same human family. In terms of emotion, the poet invokes feelings of hurt and anxiety through the Land.

The poem suggests that the indigenous Australians are in a bad condition through the use of various literary techniques. The Land is heard calling out for her “ first born” the indigenous Australians, and the poet describes that “ the light of their being barely aglow?” which is a metaphor that suggests the vitality of the indigenous Australians are diminished and there is little hope in their future. Therefore we get the idea that the indigenous Australians are backwards in terms of political economy, social and education wise. The Land is also “ strain my ears for the sound of their laughter” which is another metaphor which seems to the readers that the indigenous Australians have little joy and happiness in their life. We get an image of the backwardness of the indigenous Australians that they deprived and therefore unhappy. Through the line “ Where are the laws and the legends I gave?”, the poet suggest that the culture that the indigenous Australian’s culture history are

diminished and forgotten. The readers get an image that the indigenous Australians has been neglected and their culture wiped out , therefore the indigenous Australians have no identity or culture to call their own. To sum up, it is suggested that the indigenous Australians are in a bad condition which includes the lost of their culture which has been past down for generations.

The poem also presents to us the idea that all human are equals and therefore part of the human family, thus there should not be any discrimination against any race, which includes the indigenous Australians. The poet express this to readers through the line “ They were formed out of my dust” is a metaphor which renames the people are being born, which is a reference the Bible. According to the Bible, people are formed out of dust and thus it means that all people are formed from the same substance, and dust being part of the earth or “ God” , thus all humans are equal in God’s eye and thus have to be treated with respect. Another evidence of the idea of equality is in the line “ you whom I born after ” which suggest that the Land willing to forgive the white Australians for the past misdeed as, in the poem the Land acknowledges the white Australians one of her children. To conclude, the poem indicates the idea all humans are equal and the Land accepts both the indigenous Australians and white people.

The Land in the poem expresses various feelings and emotion throughout the poem. The Land is personified as a mother and the various people her children. The Land is anxious that her “ first born” cannot be found and her feelings are intensified. This makes the situation more dramatic as the anxiety of a mother who has lost a child is without comparison. The Land

would feel that way as the indigenous Australians do not have much vitality and playing very little part in society due to their backwardness , thus the indigenous people are “ missing” in society. The Land is hurt due to the fact her “ first born” is dying and neglected. The Land as a mother will not want to see her children dying and neglected. We thus feel the anxiety and hurt felt by the Land.

In conclusion, the poet seems to confront us the dire situation faced by the indigenous Australians. The poet might be suggesting that we should treat humans equally and fairly as we are all part of this global family.

In conclusion, the indigenous Australians should forgive and not forget. The poet might be suggesting that we should treat humans equally fair as we are part of this global family. This will ensure a better future for the next generation as hatred in the indigenous Australians towards each other will not be passed down