

Deconstructing the
depth and privacy of
love in when you say
nothing at all



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Deconstruction is a criticism theory based on the work of Jacques Derrida. He believes that language is uncertain. In the practice of literary criticism, deconstruction is used to find fallacy, contradiction of accepted values, thoughts, structure or meaning. The contradiction in language might be described in paradox and irony. According to Miriam Webster on line dictionary, paradox means a statement that is seemingly contradictory or opposed to common sense and yet is perhaps true.

Understanding the truth meaning in paradox is the work of deconstruction as it tries to prove that the contradictory meaning is true and acceptable to common sense. Irony is a figure of speech that the meaning is the opposite. Irony is also a contradictory with its meaning. When we say something, we mean the opposite. Analyzing the meaning of irony is also the work of deconstruction. The song which was sung by Ronan Keating above was the original soundtrack of a film entitled by “ Nothing Hill”. However, I will try to ignore the relation of the film with this song.

This song tells about a couple’s love. Their love is too special and deep to be expressed by words. It is too private to be understood by other people. The dept and truth of their love can only be understood and felt by them. This song contains paradoxes about someone who are in love. Generally, when we are in love, we want the world to know. We will be satisfied if our love is recognized by other people. On the other hand, the most beautiful thing about the love in this song is its privacy. Therefore, I will explain the deconstruction of this song by analyzing the paradoxes.

1. The depth of love The first stanza of the song contains two paradoxes. The speaker tells how his lover can speak right to his heart. Speaking is generally associated with saying words to tell something to someone else. On the other hand, the speaker says that without saying a word, his lover has made her point to him. It's amazing how you can speak right to my heart Without saying a word you can light up the dark Even though she never explains or just tells her feeling to him, she can erase his doubt.

She has made her point that she loves him so much and there is no need to doubt her love. The second paradox is shown in the next two lines. Try as I may I can never explain What I hear when you don't say a thing The speaker hears the explanation when she does not say anything. Hearing is an activity done by our ears. We can only hear something that has sound. In this case the speaker hears when she does not even make any sound. The paradox explained above proves how deep their love is. Even words are too shallow to express their love.

The deeper the love is the more difficult it is to be expressed. As the speaker confesses that he can never explain it, it proves that their love is deep indeed. The explanation of the paradoxes in the first stanza is shown in the second stanza that happens to be the chorus. Instead of expressing love by saying it with words, the speaker's lover reflects her love through her body language. The speaker interprets her smile as saying that she needs him. Her eyes say that she'll never leave him. And the touch of her hands says that she will always catch him wherever he falls.

This explanation makes the paradox in the last line of the second stanza logical. You say it best, when you say nothing at all The interpretation of this line refers to the previous explanation. When words are too shallow to express the depth of love, the best expression is the reflection of love in her whole body. 2. Recognition of love vs privacy of love The third stanza contains a paradox about the joy of their love. They enjoy the privacy of this love instead of announcing their love to the world. They enjoy the people's bewilderment of such love that can only be understood by them.

Generally people need their love recognized. When we are in love, we want everybody to feel our happiness. We even try to show our romance in public and we like the feeling when people are amazed by our love. That is why unrecognized love is often frustrating just like Romeo and Juliet. This feeling is expressed in the first line of the third stanza. All day long I can hear people talking aloud The speaker's tone sounds frustrating. He can hear people try to tell the world their romantic relationship, all day long!

The words all day long emphasize the people's tendency of recognition of love. However, the speaker still enjoys the privacy of his love that is shown in the next two lines. But when you hold me near, you drown out the crowd When the speaker is frustrated by his unrecognized love, his lover's feeling to him reminds him of the joy that the privacy of their love brings to them. Her love can fulfill the need of recognized love and give him the joy of their private love. They enjoy the love that can only be felt and understood by themselves.