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Line by line critical discussion of Pablo Neruda's Poem *Tonight I Can Write:—*

Chilean poet Pablo Neruda is remembered for his poems with universal. It is true that he had helped the Latin American literature to transcend the mere border of Latin America and presented it in front of the whole world. Though some critics alleged him as a fanatic supporter of communism, his love poems have given him an international reputation. If Vallejo, who deserved more recognition, was famous only in his land, Neruda's fame spread worldwide. In 1960s and 1970s his love poems served the tongues of students. It is needless to say how famous he was because the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971 was awarded to him.

When he was only thirteen years old, his first poetry was published. But it was *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* that made him famous overnight in 1924. Though many critics revoke the poems for their erotic quality, the poems got a worldwide fame. The lucid language and simple imagery of the poems are really remarkable. *Tonight I Can Write* is the twentieth of the collection. The poem depicts the desolated condition of a lover after being desolated by his lady love. The poet speaker, here, with the employment of simple natural imagery, describes his desolated condition as his beloved has gone away. In each and every line there is the tone of desolation of the poet speaker. If we go into the inner world of the poem, the desolated condition will clearly be discernible.

"Tonight I can write the saddest lines": —

The poem starts with this line. Apparently, it seems to be a simple line. The meaning is also as simple as water. It was the very night of the composition of the poem. But if we can understand the metaphorical meaning, we will be able to understand that it is a long time since the beloved left the poet speaker and the poet speaker was unable to write about that isolated condition so long and he can now be able to express his grief. The line is many times in the poem. It is repeated because the poet speaker cannot bear with the separation of the beloved. It may also suggest that the poet speaker, somehow, has been able to heal his angst of being desolated and

that is why he is writing about his condition tonight. According to the poet speaker, tonight he is writing the 'saddest lines' because the poem is a result of being separated from his beloved.

"Write, for example, 'The night is shattered

and the blue stars shiver in the distance.'" :—

In the next two lines the poet speaker uses natural imagery to depict his isolated condition. The very night of composing the poem is 'shattered'. That is to say that the night itself is upset. Actually, as the beloved has left the poet speaker, he is very upset. So this can be n objective correlative for the present condition of the lover's mind. The poet speaker also says that the blue stars are shivering in to see his sorrow. Actually, as the stars are high above the sky, they are shivering due to excessive heat. It may also be for the long distance from the earth. The present distance in between the lover and the beloved is seen through the distance in between the earth and the stars. This reference of the stars also hints at the cosmic relationship of the lover and the beloved. The time is night and thus, it suits with the mood of the poet speaker.

"**The night wind resolves in the sky and sings.**"—

This line bears the sign that the night is full of wind. The wind is blowing with a reasonable sound. The poet speaker thinks the sound of the wind to be a song that tells about his (the lover) separation from his beloved as he is describing through his lyrical poem.

"Tonight I can Write the saddest lines

I loved her and sometimes she loved me too.":—

As it is said earlier that the poet speaker was so obsessed with his lost love that he cannot forget his ladylove. Here, the lover is recapitulating about the quality time spent with his beloved. From this line it is clear that it is the lady who is responsible for the break up. The poet speaker clearly states that he first started loving and his beloved responded. Though this cannot be taken for granted because line number 9 refutes it. There the poet speaker says that his lady love first loved him and he responded. Thus, it is ambiguous enough. The intermingling of past and present in the poem helps the lover to recapitulate the memory.

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“Through nights like this one I held her in my arms

I kissed her again and again under the endless sky”: —

The poet speaker here is recapitulating the old golden days spent with his beloved. In nights like the present one, the lover and the beloved would spend quality time. In their love-tryst the lover would kiss her a lot. According to the speaker the kisses were endless in number like that of the endless sky. The suggestion here is that their love was an endless one. The erotic imagery in these lines persuade some critics to blame Neruda to be immature because the poems of this collection were composed at his very early age (20 years). However, we can relate these lines to the very first two lines of the poem *Lullaby* by W. H. Auden:

“Lay your sleeping head, my love,

Human on my faithless arm;”

“She loved me sometimes, I loved her too.

How could one not have loved her great still eyes.”—

These lines hints at the intensity of the love of both the lover and the beloved. The poet speaker says that there was a deep love in between the lover and the beloved. The eyes of the beloved were so bewitching for the lover. There was a stillness in the eyes of the beloved. The lover would lose himself into the eyes of the beloved. These lines also bear that the lover had a great passion for his beloved. The poet speaker also hints at the fickle nature of the love. The line “How could…still eyes.” Suggests that the poet speaker is desperate enough to forget his love for his beloved.

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