

3rd semester

Unit-I

O Captain! My Captain!

**BY WALT
WHITMAN**

About the author

The poem O Captain! My Captain, written by Walt Whitman (1865) consists of 3 stanzas. It was published in his work Leaves of Grass. It is a symbolic poem in which Captain refers to Abraham Lincoln and the Ship refers to the USA. The poem describes the victory of the Union after the end of the Civil War and also the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

Stanza 1

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red, Where
on the deck my Captain lies Fallen
cold and dead.

In the first stanza, Whitman calls upon the Captain (Lincoln) of the Ship (USA) that 'fearful trip' (dreadful Civil War) has come to an end. The people have won the victory at last, which they quested for i.e. the victory of the union.

Poet tells the captain that port (home) is very near and now he can hear the sound of temple bells and the cries of the enthusiastic people who are eagerly

waiting for him. The enthusiasm increases as the ship reach near the port.

Keel has been thrown off the ship so as to keep ship stable.

In the next lines, this enthusiasm is replaced by gloom. The captain is dead now and blood is

oozing from his body. This makes the poet exclaim 'O heart! Heart! Heart!' The captain, who was supposed to be praised by the people for his peerless bravery is now lifeless and

motionless.

Stanza 2

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;

Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,

For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;

Here Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck,

You've fallen cold and dead.

In the second stanza, Whitman tries to talk to the Captain, who, he knows well, is dead. This

technique of talking to the dead is called apostrophe. The poet asks the captain to rise up as

for him, bells are being rung, flags are being hoisted, musical instruments are being rung, flowers are being curled etc.

The people are eagerly waiting for his arrival, but he is dead now. It should be noted that the

captain is dead now and hence these ceremonies are of his funeral. The poet goes in reminiscence and tries to consider this death to be fancy but at last, he has to believe that Captain is dead. Poet calls him father because, for him, Lincoln is not just a military leader

but the father of the nation and laments over his loss.

Stanza 3

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O
bells! But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain
lies, Fallen cold and dead.

In the 3rd stanza, we find the duality of emotions. Whitman experiences the euphoria of their

victory but at the same time laments over the death of Lincoln, which is a big loss for the nation. The poet says that now the captain is dead. His lips are pale. He can neither feel the

arms of the poet nor his heart is beating.

It is such a time when the ship has arrived at its destination. The 'fearful trip'

i.e. horrors of the Civil War is over now and there is relief among the people.

People are rejoicing but the poet is mourning over the death of Lincoln. The

'deck' here refers to the cemetery of Lincoln. Poet, moving around this place,

laments over his death. Hence the poem ends with both victories as well as loss

MALLIKA SRINIVASAM

Mallika Srinivasan, the Tractor Queen was born on November 19, 1959. She was always brilliant in academics. Her father's name is Mr. A Sivasailam, a noted industrialist. Mallika is the eldest daughter of her late father Mr. A Sivasailam.

Mallika Srinivasan is the pride of her parents. She Married the CMD of TVS Motor, Venu Srinivasan and lived happily with their two children.

She took a keen interest in business studies. This is the reason why she pursued her degree in MA (econometrics) from Madras University. Thereafter, she went abroad to pursue further studies. She received her MBA degree from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

She has held various positions in industry bodies including the Tractor Manufacturers' Association of India, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, and Confederation of Indian Industry. She is known for her contribution to the Indian agriculture machinery business. Mallika is also known for her entrepreneurial skills.

Mallika Srinivasan is a member of the Governing Board of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai, member of the Executive Board of the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, Governing Body of Stella Maris College, Chennai, and amember of the Bharathidasan Institute of Management (BIM), Trichy.

As far as corporate social responsibility (CSR) is concerned, Mallika Srinivasan supports several healthcare and educational facilities in Tirunelveli. In addition, she also support the the Cancer Hospital in Chennai, Sankara Nethralaya through the Indira Sivasailam Endowment Fund, and also promotes the musical tradition of Carnatic music.

Mallika strengthened TAFE's partnership with an American agricultural equipment manufacturer named AGCO for the growth of both the companies. TAFE – Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited is now just behind Mahindra Tractors in India in terms of revenue & turnover, and comes in a close 3rd after the US giant, John Deere.

MONOPHTONGS

The word monophthong comes from the Greek “mono”, which means “one”, and “-phthong”, which means “tone” or “sound”. So monophthong means “one sound” or “single sound”.

There are 12 monophthongs in English. Review the list below as well as some examples of when they are used and how they are pronounced in everyday words

Examples of Monophthongs in

English Monophthongs Example

Pronunciation

[ɪ] lip /lɪp/

Pronounced in the front part of the vocal tract, with the tongue half-closed to the roof of the mouth and the lips in a spread position.

[i:] sheep /ʃi:p/

Articulated in the front part of the vocal tract, with the tongue close to the roof of the mouth and the lips in a spread position.

[ʊ] cook /kʊk/

Produced in the back part of the vocal tract, with the tongue close to the back of the roof of the mouth and the lips in a rounded position.

[u:] fool /fu:l/

Articulated in the back part of the vocal tract, with the tongue close to the roof of the mouth and the lips in a rounded position.

[e] ten /ten/

Produced in the central part of the vocal tract, with the tongue close to the roof of the mouth and the lips in a rounded position.

[ɜ:] girl /gɜ:l/

Pronounced in the central part of the vocal tract, with the tongue partly opened and the lips in an unrounded position.

[ə] among /ə'mʌŋ/ Articulated in the central part of the vocal tract, with the

lips partly opened.

[ɔ:] cord /kɔ:d/ Articulated in the back part of the vocal tract, with the tongue partly opened and the lips in a rounded position.

Pronounced in the back part of the vocal tract, with the tongue completely open and low in the mouth, and the lips in a spread position.

The characteristics of monophthongs

Monophthongs can be found in any part of a word. However, they are often found in the middle of a word.

You can find monophthongs at the beginning and end of a word. For example, in words like after, and lazy.

Monophthongs are also divided into long and short.

Long monophthongs

Long monophthongs are vowels with long pronunciation. There are 5 long vowels:

/a:/ as in calm.

/u:/ as in cool.

/i:/ as in leap.

/ɜ:/ as in turn.

/ɔ:/ as in all.

Short monophthongs

Short monophthongs are vowels with a 'short' sound, which means that they are not extended sounds. Compare the vowel sound in eat and sit for example. The first is long and the second is short. There are 7 short vowels:

/ɪ/ as in sit.

/ʊ/ as in boot.

/e/ as in bed.

/ə/ as in letter.

/æ/ as in rat.

/ʌ/ as in bus

/ɒ/ as in pot

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a literary device that is used to create vivid imagery in writing. An onomatopoeic word sounds like the sound it is describing, so we instantly know what it means.

In other words - when said out loud, onomatopoeic words phonetically imitate the sound that they describe. There often used to add emotion and make writing more fun, expressive and relatable.

Examples of Onomatopoeia in Sentence

- 1) On my first morning on the farm, I was awoken suddenly by the cock-a-doodle-do of the resident rooster.
- 2) Ticktock, ticktock... the sound of the clock was all that could be heard in the hospital waiting room.
- 3) I ordered online proofreading services with the click of a mouse.
- 4) I knew we had finally left the city when I could hear the gentle moo of the cows in the field.
- 5) Quack, quack went the ducks as we threw them our stale bread.
- 6) Zip! My dress was fastened and I was finally ready for the wedding.
- 7) It was lovely to wake up to the tweet of the birds outside my bedroom window.

PUNCTUATION MARKS

The most common punctuation marks in English are: capital letters and full stops, question marks, commas, colons and semi-colons, exclamation marks and quotation marks.

In speaking, we use pauses and the pitch of the voice to make what we say clear. Punctuation plays a similar role in writing, making it easier to read.

CAPITAL LETTERS

Capital letters also known as upper case letters are used for following

The first letter of sentence

Dr David James is the consultant at Leeds City Hospital

The first letter of pronouns as well as every letter of certain acronyms

Virat Kohli, Telugu, the Charminar. Sikh, Holi, Hyderabad.

The first person pronoun I is regardless of its position in a sentence.

FULLSTOP

A full stop(.) also known as a period is used in following ways

At the end of a sentence that is not a question or an exclamation
He has just arrived .He knocked the door.

COMMA AND SEMICOLON

We use commas to separate a list of similar words or phrases:

It's important to write in clear, simple, accurate words.

colons (:) and semi-colons (;)

We use colons to introduce lists:

There are three main reasons for the success of the government: economic, social and political.

We also use colons to indicate a subtitle or to indicate a subdivision of a topic:

Life in Provence: A Personal View

We often use colons to introduce direct speech:

Then he said: 'I really cannot help you in any way.'

We commonly use a colon between sentences when the second sentence explains or justifies the first sentence:

Try to keep your flat clean and tidy: it will sell more easily.

We use semi-colons instead of full stops to separate two main clauses. In such cases, the clauses are related in meaning but are separated grammatically: Spanish is spoken throughout South America; in Brazil the main language is Portuguese.

Semi-colons are not commonly used in contemporary English. Full stops and commas are more common.

e friendly, more talkative, more open than last time we met them.

We do not normally use a comma before and at the end of a list of single words: They travelled through Bulgaria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland.

American English does use a comma in lists before and:

We took bread, cheese, and fruit with us.

We use commas to separate words or phrases that mark where the voice would pause slightly:

I can't tell you now. However, all will be revealed tomorrow at midday.

We had, in fact, lost all of our money.

James, our guide, will accompany you on the boat across to the island.

quotation marks ('...' or "...")

Quotation marks in English are '...' or "...". In direct speech, we enclose what is said

within a pair of single or double quotation marks, although single quotation marks are becoming more common. Direct speech begins with a capital letter and can be preceded by a comma or a colon:

She said, “Where can we find a nice Indian restaurant?” (or She said: ‘Where can we find a nice Indian restaurant?’)

We can put the reporting clause in three different positions. Note the position of commas and full stops here:

The fitness trainer said, ‘Don’t try to do too much when you begin.’ (quotation mark after comma introducing speech and after full stop)

‘Don’t try to do too much when you begin,’ the fitness trainer said. (comma before closing quotation mark)

‘Don’t try to do too much,’ the fitness trainer said, ‘when you begin.’ (commas separating the reporting clause)

When we use direct speech inside direct speech, we use either single quotation marks inside double quotation marks, or double quotation marks inside single quotation marks:

“It was getting really cold,” he said, “and they were saying ‘When can we go back home?’”

Jaya said, ‘They were getting really excited and were shouting “Come on!”’.

We commonly use question marks inside the quotation marks unless the question is part of the reporting clause:

‘Why don’t they know who is responsible?’ they asked.

So did they really say ‘We will win every match for the next three weeks’?

We also use single quotation marks to draw attention to a word. We can use quotation marks in this way when we want to question the exact meaning of the

word:

I am very disappointed by his ‘apology’. I don’t think he meant it at all.

NEW ‘WAR’ OVER NORTH SEA FISHING PLANS

We sometimes use quotation marks to refer to the titles of books, newspapers, magazines, films, songs, poems, videos, CDs, etc:

There’s a special report all about it in ‘The Daily Mail’.

We can use italics instead of quotation marks for these citations:

There’s a special report all about it in *The Daily Mail*.

Articles or chapters within books, or titles of short stories, are normally punctuated by single quotation marks:

The longest chapter in the book is the last one called ‘The Future of Africa’.

We use exclamation marks to indicate an exclamative clause or expression in informal writing. When we want to emphasise something in informal writing, we sometimes use more than one exclamation mark:

Listen!

Oh no!!! Please don’t ask me to phone her. She’ll talk for hours!!!

unit-II

THE SOLITARY REAPER

**BY WILLIAM
WORDSWORTH**

Summary

“The Solitary Reaper” by William Wordsworth is written as a recollection of an overwhelming emotional experience. It is about the song sung by a Solitary Reaper. ‘The Solitary Reaper’ was singing and doing her work without minding anyone. But, the poet

was observing her, mesmerized by the song. He compares her song to that of Nightingale and the Cuckoo-bird, yet he states that her song is the best. Despite the poet's inability to decipher the song's meaning, he understands that it is a song of melancholy.

The poet listened motionlessly until he left the place, but the song never left him. Even after a long time, he has come away from that place, he says, he could still listen. The song continued to echo in his heart long after it is heard no more. The beautiful experience left a deep impact and gave him a long-lasting pleasure

Analysis of The Solitary Reaper

Stanza One

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by
herself; Stop here, or gently
pass!

Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

In the First stanza of "The Solitary Reaper," Wordsworth describes how the Reaper was singing all alone. During one of his journeys in the countryside of Scotland, he saw a Highland girl working in the field all alone. She had no one to help her out in the field. So she was singing to herself. She was singing without knowing that someone was listening to her song. The poet doesn't want to disturb her solitude so requests the passerby's go without disturbing

her. She was immersed in her work of cutting and binding while singing a melancholy song. For the poet, he is so struck by the sad beauty of her song that the whole valley seems to overflow with its sound.

Stanza Two

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

In the second stanza of “The Solitary Reaper,” the poet compares the young woman’s song with ‘Nightingale’ and ‘Cuckoo’ – the most celebrated birds by the writers and poets for the sweetness of voice. But, here he complains that neither ‘Nightingale’ nor the ‘Cuckoo’ sang a song that is as sweet as hers. He says that no nightingale has sung the song so soothing like that for the weary travelers. For, the song of the girl has stopped him from going about his business. He is utterly enchanted that he says that her voice is so thrilling and penetrable like that of the Cuckoo Bird, which sings to break the silence in the ‘Hebrides’ Islands. He symbolically puts forth that her voice is so melodious and more than that of the two birds, known for their voice.

Stanza Three

Will no one tell me what she sings?—

Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow

For old, unhappy, far-off things,

And battles long ago:

Or is it some more humble lay,

Familiar matter of to-day?

Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,

That has been, and may be again?

In the third stanza of “The Solitary Reaper,” the poet depicts his plight over not understanding the theme or language of the poem.

The poet couldn’t understand the local Scottish dialect in which the reaper was singing. So tries to imagine what the song might be

about. Given that it is a ‘plaintive number’ and a ‘melancholy

strain’ (as given in line 6) he speculates that her song might be

about some past sorrow, pain, or loss ‘of old, unhappy things’ or

battles fought long ago. Or perhaps, he says, it is a humbler, simpler

song about some present sorrow, pain, or loss, a ‘matter of to-day.’

He further wonders if that is about something that has happened in the past or something that has reoccurred now.

Stanza Four

Whate’er the theme, the Maiden sang

As if her song could have no ending;

I saw her singing at her work,

And o’er the sickle bending;—

I listened, motionless and still;

And, as I mounted up the hill,

The music in my heart I bore,

Long after it was heard no more.

In the fourth stanza, the poet decides not to probe further into the theme. He comes to the conclusion that whatever may be the theme of her poem, it is not going to end. Not only her song but also her suffering sounds like a never-ending one. He stays there motionless and listened to her song quite some times. Even when he left and mounted up the hill he could still hear her voice coming amongst the produce, she was cutting and binding. Though the poet left that place, the song remained in his heart, long after he heard that song.

Literary/ Poetic Devices Used

‘The Solitary Reaper’ by William Wordsworth uses straightforward language and meter as well as natural theme and imagery. Once again Wordsworth reflected his belief in the importance of the natural world. The poem highlights his definition of poetry to be ‘a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings from the poet and the readers’ part.

Rhyme scheme

The poem’s 32 lines are equally distributed among the four stanzas.

Each stanza follows the rhyme scheme: ABABCCDD. Use of end rhymes, such as “profound/sound”, “still/hill”, “lay/day” and “grain/strain” makes the poem melodious

Apostrophe

The poem “The Solitary Reaper” begins with an Apostrophe “Behold” where the poet addresses the unknown

passersby. He uses it again in the seventh line “O Listen” telling them how the valley is filled with the sound of her.

Symbolism/ Metaphor

The poet makes a symbolic comparison of the young woman’s song with Nightingale and Cuckoo bird for the melodious nature of her song. But it turns out to be hyperbole for he exaggerates that her song is better than theirs. The poet very much captivated by her song that the valley is “overflowing with the sound”. Again, he says that the song looked like a never-ending as her sorrows.

Rhetorical questions

The rhetorical question helps to make the point clear. For example, Wordsworth used “Will no one tell me what she sings?”, “That has been, and may be again?” and “Familiar matter of to-day?” it to express his curiosity over the theme and meaning of the song, the girl sang.

Imagery

The imagery used in a literary work enables the readers to perceive things involving their five senses. For example, “Reaping and singing by herself”, “I saw her singing at her work” and “More welcome notes to weary bands” gives a pictorial description of the young woman at work. He makes the readers visualize what he has seen and how he felt.

About William Wordsworth

William Wordsworth is one of the most important English poets and a founder of the Romantic Movement of English literature, a style of writing that focuses on emotion and imagination. Wordsworth

became known as a Lakeland Poet because of the area where he lived, which is renowned for its beautiful, wild landscapes, charming pastures, and countless lakes. He was often called a nature poet because of his emphasis on the connection between humans and the natural world. He became widely successful and was named Poet Laureate of England in 1843. Explore more William Wordsworth poems.

Stephen Leacock enjoyed enormous popular success with his short stories and sketches. "How to live to be 200" is a beautiful essay, in which the writer has satirized those people who are obsessed by the idea of "Health Maniac". It is a humorous essay on the fantastic health habits of a person known as Jiggins type young people. Jiggins symbolizes the so many young people who are unusually obsessed with their bodily exercises. Although he kept on taking hard exercises regularly yet Jiggins died in his youth and could not see his old age. The writer satirizes all those people who are obsessed by the idea of being strong and healthy.

He is of the view that physical fitness and health cannot postpone the death. One has to die at an appointed time. One should be worried about his health. One should take care of himself but not to be preplanned in hard and daily exercises.

While talking about germs and bacilli, the writer provokes laughter and amuses us with his examples and sayings. But the purpose, again, to make us realize the fact that we should not be worried about the germs at a time. As they are harmless at a certain time and they are useful at a certain time. He is of the view; life is a gift of God and should not spoil it in useless activities.

HOW TO LIVE TO BE 2

**BY STEPHEN
LEACOCK**

The essay, it can be said, is a remarkable satire on human activities. It also reminds us “Leisure”, a beautiful story by “W.H.Davies”, in which the poet satirizes the dull and boring routine life, useless care and worries of human beings which snatches the real luxury of life from the Life according to “Stephen Leacock” is a heavenly gift and one should enjoy it without being obsessed by useless habits and activities. Leacock tells us that Jiggins, the health maniac, used to take a cold bath every morning so as to open his pores. After his cold bath, he took a hot sponge in order to close his pores. Before putting on his clothes for going to office, Jiggins used to stand and breathe at an open window for half an hour in order to expand his lungs. After putting on his shirt he used to perform a short exercise by moving forward and backward. He repeated all such exercises even during his duty hours at his office instead of using his spare time in eating or having some refreshment. He would lie on his stomach on the floor and lifted himself up with his knuckles (the joints of fingers). In the evening Jiggins lifted iron bars, cannonballs and pulled himself up to the ceiling. All the noise of the exercise was so loud that one could hear the stumps far away. Jiggins spent half the night slinging himself around the room to make his brain clear. Unfortunately, even so much exercise did not keep Jiggins alive to enter his old age as his death came at an early age. Perhaps he died earlier than the other men who did not perform the regular exercise as Jiggins. Like Jiggins many young men have the same health mania (craze). They behave exactly like Jiggins and become a great nuisance (trouble) for others. They get up at impossible hours and start running marathon race before breakfast. They like to walk barefoot on grass. They search for places blessed with ozone (fresh air). They look for easily digestible food. They avoid eating meat because it has too much nitrogen. They avoid eating fruit because it has not any nitrogen. What they prefer is albumen (white of egg), starch (nishasta) etc. they do not drink tap water. They do not eat canned food. They not drink glass water. They do not drink alcohol in any form. They became a nuisance for all in the name of health. Even then we can see that like others they easily fall ill and die. Thus in spite of their troublesome exercises they cannot attain long age. Stephen Leacock does not like to see people obsessed with body care. As obsessions are always bad. As a counter attack to health mania (obsession) Stephen Leacock humorously gives us some pieces of advice. We should get up in the morning hardly half an hour before our office opens. We should not care much about getting pure and fresh air. We should have warm baths instead of cold baths so that we may get rid of the cold pinching water and

may feel comfortable in our warm baths. We should not worry about germ and bacilli. As they are totally harmless. We should eat whatever we want and to the extent as much as we like. The only test is: Can we pay for it? Moreover we should eat whatever our food may or may not contain: starch , albumen or nitrogen or anything else. We should not bother about fresh air. We should not go to open places for it. As far as exercise is concerned , it is also not necessary at all. We can hire a taxi and see others playing football , running races and doing gymnastics. We can even do so when sitting in some shade or smoking cigarettes. We should divert our attention away from our body care and attend to the enjoyment of life like a carefree person. We should remember that the more we enjoy the joys of life , the more we shall become healthy. Stephen Leacock seems

DIPHTONGS

The word ‘diphthong’ comes from the Greek and means ‘two voices’ or ‘two

sounds.’ In phonetics, a diphthong is a vowel in which there is a noticeable sound change within the same syllable. (A single or simple vowel is known as a monophthong.) The process of moving from one vowel sound to another is called gliding, which is why another name for a diphthong is a gliding vowel

but they are also known as compound vowels, complex vowels, or moving vowels. The sound change that turns a single vowel into a diphthong is called diphthongization. Diphthongs are sometimes referred to as ‘long vowels’ but

this is misleading. While vowel sounds do change in a diphthong, they do not necessarily take more time to say than a monophthong

/aɪ/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to ‘eye’ and most often occurs with letter combinations that include /i/, /igh/, and /y. Examples: crime, like, lime

/eɪ/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to “great” and is most often used

with letter combinations that include /ey/, /ay/, /ai/ and /a/. Examples:

break, rain, weight

/əʊ/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to “boat” and most often occurs with letter combinations that include /ow/, /oa/ and /o/. Examples: slow, moan, though

/aʊ/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to “ow!” and most often occurs with letter combinations that include /ou/ and /ow/. Examples: brown, hound, now

/eə/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to “air” and most often occurs with letter combinations that include /ai/, /a/, and /ea/. Examples: lair, stair, bear

/ɪə/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to “ear” and most often occurs with letter combinations that include /ee/, /ie/ and /ea/. Examples: beer, near, pier

/ɔɪ/ This creates sounds similar to “boy” and most often occurs with letter combinations that include /oy/ and /oi/. Examples: oil, toy, coil

/ʊə/ This diphthong creates sounds similar to “sure” and most occurs with letter combinations that include /oo/, /ou/, /u/, and /ue/. Examples: lure, pure, fur

The study of the origin and the meanings of the word is known as ETYMOLOGY. Words have histories that go back several hundred some times. Etymology tells us how a word comes into language and how its meaning changes overtime.

However, it often does a lot more than just that.

Learning the origins of word helps build your vocabulary by giving you a better sense of how to use words correctly in context

Words coming to a language in many different ways. In a language like English which as borrowed a sizeable part of its vocabulary from cultures and languages around the world, learning about the origins of words also leads to learning more

about history and culture.

Humble modest, lowly or inferior in status or manner, the Latin word *humilis* meant low or lowly and was itself derived from the Latin word *humus* which means earth or ground. The connection between ground and low and hence humble and related English words such as humility is obvious.

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unit-III

‘La Belle Dame sans Merci’

**By John
Keats’s**

Summary

‘La Belle Dame sans Merci’ (‘the beautiful lady without mercy’) is one of John Keats’s bestloved and most widely anthologised poems; after his odes, it may well be his most famous. But is this poem with its French title a mere piece of pseudo-medievalsapism, summoning the world of chivalrous knights and beautiful but bewitching women, or does it

have a deeper meaning?

You can read ‘La Belle Dame sans Merci’ here before proceeding to our summary below (it

might be helpful to have the poem open in a separate tab so you can follow the poem and summary together)

La Belle Dame sans Merci: summary

‘La Belle Dame sans Merci.’ ‘The woman is beautiful, but merciless.’ Keats’s title, which he

got from a 15th-century courtly love poem by Alain Chartier (La Belle Dame sans Mercy), provides a clue to the poem’s plot: in summary, the poem begins with the speaker asking a knight what’s wrong – this knight-at-arms is on his own, looking pale as he loiters on a hillside.

This knight-at-arms has a lily-white forehead (i.e. he’s pale), and a rose-coloured cheek. But

symbolically, this rose is withering: love has gone rotten. It’s at this point that the voice in the

poem shifts from this first speaker – the one questioning the knight about what's up with him

– to the knight-at-arms himself. The knight then tells us his story: he met a beautiful lady in

the meadows, who the knight believes was the child of a faery – there was something fey or

supernatural and otherworldly about this woman. She had wild eyes, which imply unpredictability in her nature.

The knight tells his interlocutor how he was inspired to shower this 'faery's child' with gifts:

a garland or wreath for her head, bracelets for her wrists, and a sweet-smelling girdle for her

waist. The woman looks as though she loves these gifts, and moans sweetly. The knight puts

the lady up on his horse and rides all day without taking his eyes off her – not a pursuit we'd

recommend when riding a horse. As the lady delicately rides his horse side-saddle, as befits a

lady, she sings a 'faery's song'.

As if to complement the three gifts (garland, bracelets, 'zone' or girdle) the knight gave her,

the belle dame sans merci gives the knight three sweet gifts: sweet relish, wild honey, and

manna-dew (implying something almost divine: 'manna' was the foodstuff that fell from heaven in the Old Testament). In a strange language, the lady tells the knight she loves him.

She takes him to her Elfin grotto, where she proceeds to weep and sigh; the knight silences

her with four kisses.

The lady, in turn, silences the knight by lulling him to sleep – presumably with another ‘faery’s song’ – and the knight dreams of men, pale kings and princes, crying that ‘La belle

dame sans merci’ has him enthralled or enslaved

In the evening twilight, the knight sees the starved lips of these men – men who have presumably also been enthralled or bewitched by such a belle dame sans merci – as they try

to warn him, and then the knight awakens and finds himself alone on the hillside where the poem’s original speaker encountered him. And that’s how he ended up here, alone and palely

loitering.

La Belle Dame sans Merci: analysis

‘La Belle Dame sans Merci’ is a variation on the ballad, a poetic form that was popular – and

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La Belle Dame sans Merci: analysis

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us up short – much as the knight has been thwarted or curtailed in his romantic quest, deserted by the woman he fell in love with.

Ballads usually tell a story. And ballads are often cyclical in that the final stanza takes us back to the first stanza. We find all of these features in 'La Belle Dame sans Merci', with the

action beginning on the cold hillside with the knight-at-arms, and coming back to this place at

the end of the poem, after he has told us (or his interlocutor) how he came to be there.

In other words, 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' recalls the Middle Ages not just in its content –

knights, faeries, and the like – but in its very form.

There's a sense of reciprocity between the knight and the lady, but how equal are they?

She is

the one who is given star billing in the poem's title, of course, suggesting that the knight is

merely the passive observer, used by her, yet another victim to fall under the spell of the beautiful woman without mercy.

Running against this, however, is the to-and-fro of the action: the knight gives the lady three

gifts, and she responds with three gifts for him. He silences her sighs with kisses, before she

silences him in sleep by singing him a lullaby.

The gifts themselves are also significant. Recall how the knight makes the lady a garland for

her head, bracelets for her wrists, and a 'fragrant zone' or girdle for her waist. All three of these things are circular, used to enclose the woman as if the man is trying to keep her – and

perhaps keep her under control. A fruitless endeavour, given those wild eyes she has.

They are also things used to adorn her, while the three corresponding gifts the lady makes to

the knight – the relish, honey, and manna-dew – are all food-related. (The way to a man's

heart is through his stomach, even in a John Keats poem.)

And whether she has even been won over by his gifts remains unknowable for sure. The line

'She looked at me as she did love' implies that she loves them, and perhaps even him, but the

wording of 'as she did love' hovers delicately between two quite different meanings: it could

mean 'because she did love' or 'as if she did love', i.e. 'but in reality, she didn't; she only looked as if she did'.

And love what? The verb here is left as an intransitive one, without an object, allowing us to

guess whether she loves him or whether she merely loves the garland and bracelet he's fashioned for her (if she even loves them or merely appears to).

Sure enough, we learn later that she loves him truly: she tells him plainly enough. Or does she? She speaks the words 'I love thee true', but 'in language strange' (presumably her own

faery language), and this information is being related to us by the knight, who may have been

hearing what he wanted to hear. (She swore she loved me, honest, she just came out and said

it: 'I love thee true.') Whether he can even speak or understand her 'language strange' remains unknown, but the fact that he describes it as a 'strange' language invites reasonable

doubt.

In short, then, 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' is a fascinating poem because of its unreliability

and what it refuses to tell us. We have a mystified speaker relating a story to us which he has

heard from a (less-than-impartial) knight who has apparently come under the spell of the 'beautiful lady without mercy'. John Keats famously advocated something he called

'Negative Capability': namely, as Keats himself said, 'when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason

'La Belle Dame sans Merci' inspires such negative capability within us as readers. We cannot

arrive at a neat analysis of this bewitching poem: like the lady herself, the strange story is beautiful not least because it remains only half-understood.

Ilyas (Elias)

By Leo Tolstoy

In Ilyas by Leo Tolstoy we have the theme of happiness, materialism, generosity, faith, loss

and gratitude. Taken from his Walk in the Light and Twenty-Three Tales collection the story

is narrated in the third person by an unnamed narrator and after reading the story the reader realizes that Tolstoy may be exploring the theme of happiness. Ilyas and his wife have found happiness in the simple things in life. Where previously they were wealthy and

chasing happiness, it is only when they become labourers do they find happiness. No longer

do they have to worry about what they have when the reality is they have everything they need while working for Muhammad-Shah. A man who has generously offered Ilyas and his

wife employment. What is interesting about Muhammad-Shah is the fact that he offers work to Ilyas and his wife because he pities them. He cannot imagine that they could be happy as labourers.

This may be significant as Tolstoy may be suggesting that Muhammad-Shah and his guests

could learn something from Ilyas and his wife. Though they do find it extraordinary that Ilyas

could be happy. If anything the reader suspects that material gain is not important when it comes to happiness. Simple things like dialogue with ones you love and working to the best

of your ability are more important than material possessions. Society however does not look

at life this way. Ilyas neighbours, when he was wealthy, thought he and his family must be

happy because they were so rich. It is as though material possessions dictate what makes a

person happy. It is also interesting that Ilyas does not have the support of his children.

Symbolically this could suggest that despite all his wealth Ilyas had really live a happy life. There may be other symbolism in the story which might be important. The drinking of

kumiss by each character may suggest that there is no real division or divide between

people. Everybody is the same regardless of their financial status. Though ironically

Muhammad-Shah and his guests do not really know this. They would not consider Ilyas or

his wife to have lives that they themselves would like to live. Ilyas early prosperity; in whereby he had so much livestock, but lacked happiness could symbolically suggest that with material gain comes a distancing between man (or woman) and God. Something that

Ilyas and his wife fully understand. Though some critics might disagree.

The end of the story is interesting as it would appear as though Ilyas and his wife's message

on happiness has gotten through to Muhammad-Shah and his guests. Though it is noticeable that the message is only clear when the Mullah says that Ilyas has spoken the

truth. It is through loss that Ilyas has really found happiness. He had previously pursued a life in whereby he thought that material possession would bring him happiness. It is only

when he has lost everything does Ilyas and his wife realize that simple things can make you

a happier person. It might also be worth noting that Ilyas is grateful for the opportunities he

has while working for Muhammad-Shah. He does not appear to have any regrets about this

life. Though others might not be able to continue to move forward like Ilyas and his wife.

CONSONANT SOUNDS

Consonants are letters that stand for a type of sound we use in speech. These sounds involve a partial or complete closure of the vocal tract: for example, placing the tongue behind the front teeth, as with the consonants t and d; or closing your lips, as with the consonants b, m, and p. The opposite of consonants are vowels, which do not involve closing the vocal tract. Most letters of the English alphabet are consonants. Some letters, however, can represent more than one sound, including both consonant and vowel sounds. These letters are known as “sometimes consonants.” Always consonants

❑ b

❑ c

❑ d

❑ f

❑ g

❑ j

❑ k

❑ l

❑ m

❑ n

❑ p

❑ q

❑ s

❑ t

❑ v

❑ x

z

Sometimes consonants

h

r

w

y

Vowels and consonants Unlike consonants, vowels do not involve closing the vocal tract. Instead, they differentiate sounds based on pitch, accent, volume, and duration. The vowels are a, e, i, o, and u, and in some cases, y. However, depending on how they're used, h, r, and w can also make vowel sounds, although in grammar they are still considered consonants and do not follow the same rules as the vowels. Knowing the difference between vowels and consonants is a big help with spelling rules. In particular, knowing when to spell words with double consonants can be especially frustrating.

Whether or not a word uses double consonants with a suffix, such as drop and dropped or begin and beginning, depends not only on a word's letters but also the number of syllables.

CLICHES

A cliché is a remark that has been repeated so often repeated so often that has become almost

meaningless. The list of cliches is very long.

The overuse of cliches results in writing and speech that feels stale because the mind of the reader/listener is so used to these expressions that it no longer engages with the images that

the expression conjure. Replacing clichés involves thinking about what it really means, and

then conveying that meaning in your own words. For example, at this moment in time can be

re-written more simply as now.

Given below are few examples of how clichéd expressions can be re-written. Sentence with cliché

We need to think outside of the box to find a solution to this problem.

They took a long time to get the ball rolling.

Re-written sentence

We need to think more imaginatively to find a solution to this problem.

They took a long time to begin.

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase (this noun, pronoun, or noun phrase is the object of the preposition).

Prepositional phrases modify or describe nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs. They say something about the relationship between their object and the word they describe/modify. Prepositional phrases can tell us when [time] or where [location] something is or something happened. They can tell us the direction something is or is moving/going. They can tell us something about the word or words they describe.

In the phrase "the girl with the long hair" the prepositional phrase is "with

the long hair." It tells us something about "the girl."

In the phrase "the book on the table" the prepositional phrase is "on the table." It tells us the location of "the book."

In the sentence "I run in the morning" the prepositional phrase is "in the

morning" and it modifies the verb "run" [it tells us when I run].

In the sentence "the keys are under the table" the prepositional phrase "under the table" tells us where they keys are.

In the sentence "the play starts at five o'clock" the prepositional phrase "at five o'clock" tells us when the play starts.

In the phrase "they keys to the house" the prepositional phrase "to the house" tells us about the keys [it tells us which keys they are/what the keys are for].

In the sentence "she looked around the living room for the cat" the prepositional phrase "around the living room" tells us where she looked

and the prepositional phrase "for the cat" tells us why she looked.

Below are more sentences with their prepositional phrases in italics and the word the prepositional phrase describes in bold:

I left the house before noon

He walked through the park.

She sat beneath the tree.

The dog under the bed was scared.

She lost the book with the red cover.

They loved the gift from their cousin.

We watched the people from afar.

The teen slept until 1 pm.

Some common prepositions are

above, across, after, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, by, for, from, in, inside, into, near, of, off, on, on top of, onto, outside, over, past, through, to, toward, under, until, up, upon, with, within, and without.

THE END

5TH SEMESTER

unit-I ECOLO GY

By A k Ramanujan

The poem Ecology by AK Ramanujan is about a son's devotion to her mother and her devotion to ecology that creates a kind of conflict between the two. In a nutshell, the poet's mother gets severe migraine pain because of Red Champak Tree's pollens. The poet wants to cut the tree but his mother stops him from doing so because of her religious and emotional sentiments for the tree. The poem can be read either as a single sentence or in stanzas. There is no rhyme scheme in the poem. The poet uses a number of literary devices in the poem like metaphor, personification, and simile.

The poet says that for a number of years, during every first rain (probably the beginning of summer season), he finds his mother suffering from blinding migraine i.e. unbearable fever because of three Red Champak Trees which are a mile away from the poet's house. During the summer season, the Red Champak Trees' flowers bloom which then releases yellow pollen grains in the air which according to the poet spread like clouds throughout the street or in other words throughout the area. The pollen grains remain suspended in the air and thus do not allow the wind to get pure. It remains filled with their fragrance. In the next line, the poet says that no door can shut out i.e. prevent the pollens from entering into their black-pillared house. According to the poet, his house walls had ears and eyes, scales, smells, bone-creaks, nightly, visiting voices, and were porous like humans.

The poet personifies the house saying that like us it is also suffering from the bombardment of pollen-grains that are coming inside it through the holes which are like the pores of the human body. The poet finally tells his mother that he is going to cut the trees which flashes rage and anger in her head which is full of sweat and pain due to migraines. The poet compares her anger with twisted silver (which either on the roof or in the balcony) which is shining because of the wet knickers of her mother's grandchildren (probably his children). Thus like the silver wire, his mother's head is also twisted due to severe pain. She tells the poet that the tree is as old as she is. Its seed was seeded by a passing bird's providential droppings i.e. a bird (which is a sign of good omen) dropped the seeds of those plants.

She believes that the bird seeded the plants so that a line of cousins or in other words each new generation may be able to offer its basketsful of annual flower to God and their daughter (probably during the marriage). And for this reason, she is all prepared to bear the pain of migraines.