



PARBIN KANG

3. The Lamentation of the old pensioner (A Poem)

-W.B. Yeats

Summary and Central Idea:

"The lamentation of the old pensioner" exposes the bitter reality of every fading youth, power, love and vigour of life in front of "TIME". Time is such a controlling force, what makes all of us surrender. Through this poem, W. B. Yeats expresses his anger towards time and finally laments for the joyful past. He presents the reminiscences of his young life, compares them with the present old state and shows his rage to the time which changes him completely. Yeats says that when he was young his life was enjoyable. He was among the friends, and used to talk about love and politics. His chair used to be at the front. But at present the poet is an old man compares himself with the old broken tree fall any time and gives shade no more. Poet says that young boys are making plans and show their rage against British domination over Irish people, poet only contemplates over time. Poet still remembers the beautiful women whom he love. But, at present no girls look at him and it makes him sad. Poet is not satisfied with his present situation. He feels sorry for the loss of youthful joy. Due to his old age and appearance, the young boys and girls neither love him nor take care him. At present he has become a lonely old man miserable condition is caused by the time so poet says "I spit into the face of time that transfigured me". W. B. Yeats uses the refrain "That has transfigured" to give extra emphasis for time, which change from joyous youth to miserable old person refrain has also created a gloomy mood of this which is full of rage of the poet.

Important Questions:

1. How does the poet compare his past with his present? What are the differences between poet's past and present?
2. Why does the poet spit into the face of time?
3. Explain the title "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner."
4. What three things does the poet remember about his past/youth?

Short Answer Questions

1, 2076 Partial D Q. No. 2a

What is in the memory of the speaker in his old age? [3]

- The speaker is lamenting on the loss of his bygone days. Throughout the poem he expresses his sadness and disappointment on the loss. He becomes sad when he reminiscences about his past life in the first stanza. He has lost the companionship of his friends, and there is no one to talk about love and politics with. He is neglected and ignored. Similarly, he can't fight against human tyrants because of his age. Moreover he has lost his beloved. They only remain in his memory. Therefore, the whole poem documents the old pensioner's lamentation. He laments on the loss of his past life. In spite of getting peace and comfort, he harbors pain and dissatisfaction in his heart, comparing his present with his past. The old man of the poem, hence, laments on the lost glories of the past.

2075 GIE Q. No. 2a

why is the poet angry with the time? Explain. [3]

- The poet shows anger against the time because it has transfigured him into a broken tree. The speaker, who is quite an old man, has lost his friends and lovers because of time. Time has made him helpless old man by snatching all the beauties of his young life. The poet finds his old age more agonizing when he compares it with his youth. He complains that time did not listen to him. Since time is responsible factor for the condition, he is living in the poet shows his anger rage in the last stanza of the poem when he says, "I spit into the face of time that has transfigured me". Since time is responsible for his present state of living, the poet shows his anger. This reflects his desires of being young again. His attitude towards the old age is not good, so he writes in one of his poems written on age "An old age is nothing but a paltry thing upon stick."

2074. supp Q. No. 2e

What does the broken tree symbolize in the poem? Does Yeats compare himself with the broken tree in his old age? (The lamentation of the old pensioner) [3]

- Irish poet and dramatist, W. B. Yeats is famous for using symbols and images in the poems. This poem, "The Lamentation of the old pensioner" is rich in symbols. The broken tree is a dominant symbol in the poem. It symbolizes the lonely state of the speaker. The way broken tree stands alone in the forest and looks odd, same in the speaker's situation. The broken tree also refers to his physical state. Since the broken tree can't check the rain and the sun, people do not shelter under it. Thus the tree is left alone. Same in the speaker's situation. Since he was grown old, his friends and beloved have left him. He can't talk about love and politics.

2074 Set A Q. No. 2e

Why does the Old Pensioner lament in his old age? [3]

The Old Pensioner, the speaker of the poem, laments throughout the poem, "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner". The method of expressing such sadness and disappointment however is different. The pensioner laments by reckoning his young life and past activities. By writing about the time when he used to be by the side of fire, among the friends talking love and politics, he laments on their loss in the poem. Similarly he laments in the poem by remembering his past lovers. The pensioner also laments by taking and presenting a contrasting present. He characterizes his present time as the broken tree, and also expresses his sadness when he doesn't get the love of a single woman. The reason of such lamentation is the loss. He has lost virtually every glory of his young life. He is like a broken tree, deserted by everyone. Physically he is weak despite his desire of being strong again. He can't find any help. Because he is lonely without friends and lovers, he laments in the poem. Thus, by comparing his present state with his past, the old pensioner laments in the poem. The sole reason behind this lamentation is the loss.

5. 2074 Set B Q. No. 2

Why does the old pensioner spit into the face of Time? [3]

W.B. Yeats' old man, in his poem "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner" spits into the face of time. The main reason might be his anger and rage. The speaker is quiet old almost like a broken tree. He has lost his youth, his past friends and lovers. When he reckons the reasons behind his loss, he finds time responsible. Since time has transfigured him into a broken tree like condition, the poet laments on losing his past by gone days. The poet also realizes that he can't change time. In other words, he can't get his youth back; neither can deny the blow of time. Being helpless he spits into its face finding it only responsible. Thus, time becomes an enemy that has snatched everything from him. So growing out of hatred and anger, the poet spits into the face of time. This reaction of the speaker portrays a helpless old man's personality who wants to be young again but can't be. So, what he can only do is to spit into the face of time.

6. 2074 Partial E Q. No. 2d

How does the speaker feel about old age in "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner"? [3]

The old man of the poem is the speaker. He feels isolated like the retired pensioner feels after he/she loses his/her job. The old man of the poem "the Lamentation of the Old Pensioner" written by a famous Irish Poet and dramatist, feels isolated as he loses his beautiful past. His past is his youth; his past is his life accompanied by his friends. Therefore, he recounts the days when he used to sit round the fire with his friends. He also has lost the talks of love and politics. This makes him feel isolated. Not only is that he's ignored by everyone because his condition is like broken tree. His lovers have left him. He remembers

them only in his memory. Thus, the loss of these many things makes the speaker feel isolated. Moreover, when he compares his old broken tree like life with his youthful past, he feels isolated.

7. 2073 Set C Q. No. 2e

What makes the old pensioner feel isolated in his old age? [3]

Please refer to [2074 Partial E Q. No. 2d](#)

8. 2073 Set D Q. No. 2c

Why does the poet spit into the face of time? [3]

Please refer to [2074 Set B Q.No. 2e](#)

9. 2072 Set E Q. No. 26

What is the lamentation of the old pensioner? [3]

Please refer to [2076 Partial D Q.No. 2a](#)

10. 2071 Set C Q. No. 2

Why does the old pensioner condemn the time? [3]

Please refer to [2075 GIE Q. No. 2a](#)

11. 2071 Partial Set B Q. No. 12 b

Why does the old pensioner want to spit into the face of time? [3]

♡ Please refer to [2074 Set B Q.No. 2e](#)

12. 2071 Supp Q. No. 126

How and why does the old pensioner lament? [3]

Please refer to [2074 Set A Q.No. 2e](#)

13. 2070 Supp Set A Q. No. 12b

What makes the old pensioner feel isolated in his old age? [3]

Please refer to [2074 Partial E Q.No. 2d](#)

14. 2068 Q. No. 12 e

Why does the poet want to spit into the face of time? [3]

Please refer to **2074 Set B Q. No. 2e**

15. 2067 Q. No. 12 a

Why is the poet angry in 'The lamentation of the Old pensioner'? [3]

The poet of the poem "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner" is an old man who has retired from the youth of his life. He is seen quite angry. The reason behind his anger can be his own state of living. He is living a neglected and virtually ignored life. He is isolated from the beauties of his life. The friends, the lovers and the talks only reside in his memory. When calculate, he finds time responsible against it. This situation really vexed him. He couldn't do any thing but display his hatred and anger. He wants to be cared, loved, focused and more importantly noticed. So there is a gap between what he wants to be and what he really is. Caught between these intricate situations, the poet expresses his anger which is evident in his reaction against the natural course of time, I spit into the face of time," this address to the youths, "crazy rascals". Then the possible reason against his anger is his state of present living ignored broken tree. Out of anger he hates time which is so cyclic and so permanent.

16. 2066 Q. No. 12 a

Explain the title of the poem "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner". [3]

The title "The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner" is revised form of W.B. Yeats poem "The Old Pensioner." The title virtually covers the main idea of the poem. When one happens to read the title of the poem, he/she presupposes that something might have happened to the old pensioner but the pensioner as the readers presume is not the one who has retired from his job. It has a metaphoric meaning. The pensioner denotes the old man who is the speaker in the poem. He is compared with the pensioner in the sense that the old man has got a retirement from the youth of his life. This old man, the old pensioner, is seen helplessly weeping, lamenting on the loss of his youth. The way he retired pensioner lives recounting his bygone days in the office, the old man in the poem recounts his past days in isolation. Thus, the title of the poem is really meaningful with a big coverage of the theme of the poem and condition of the old man. The poem has become much speculative with its title as every reader plunges into the poem with suppositions in the mind.

17. 2065 Q. No. 12 e

Why does the poet show his anger against time?

Please refer to **2075 GIE Q. No. 2a**

18. 2062 Q. No. 12 a

What is the speaker lamenting on? [3]

Please refer to **2076 Partial D Q. No. 2a**

19. 2061 Q. No. 10f

How and why does the old pensioner lament? [3]

Please refer to **2074 Set A Q. No. 2e**

20. 2059 Q. No. 2 a

Mention the three things the old man laments Why is he sad about them? [3]

The old man might be lamenting on the loss of things in the poem that he embraced in the past. Among them he mentions three things in this poem. The three things he laments about are the loss of friends, the talk of love and politics and his beloved. He is sad about the loss of them. Since he lives a mere neglected life, he wants to be with the friends. He wants be in their company as he was before which is almost impossible in the present time. So the old man is sad about it. Next, he laments on the past conversation with his friends on love and politics. The old man is not listened nor can these be the subjects of discussion for him. He can't do it either through wants. Hence laments/expresses sadness about it too. Third thing he laments is the loss of his past beloved. The old man wants the love of many women the way he was loved in the past. But, there is not a single woman who turns her face upon a broken tree. This is the reason why he laments on it's loss.

2058 Q. No. 3 b

Why does the old man spit into the face of time? [3]

Please refer to **2074 set B Q. No. 2e**

2075 Set A Q. No. 3a

Write an essay on "An old man remembers"? [3]

Time changes us from one phase of life to another one. We can never resist the change. While going through the different periods of our life, we experience some phases of our life are admirable while

other are annoying. When we turn from our youth to the adulthood and from the adulthood to old age, we experience different realities. Comparatively the old age is painful and agonizing. An old man but passes his time with past memories. He remembers his youth, friends of youth and his total achievements and so on. He has memories as his friends who sometimes cheer him up while at other times upset. An old man remembers his youth and the activities associated with his youth. That is because; youth is much crucial and happy period of human life. The friends, beautiful and memorable experiences, tours, love relations, adventitious life, special relations and occasions, significant achievements and romantic time come in the memory of the old man. They all come in his memory because he alone and isolated in his life. The old man therefore revitalizes his life with memories of beautiful experiences and time. But there are not always beautiful accept to remember. An old man may have some unpleasant memories to ponder over. Since human life is not only a time of beautiful memories. We knowingly or unknowingly happen to meet sad incidences and events. In an old age, they haunt us too. An old man regrets and curses himself for such time. He now, isolation, feels miserable and helpless. At the same time and old man feels bad on losing his beautiful past. He may wish to be young again but finds all vain because he now realizes the supremacy of the time. To conclude, an old man may remember both good and bad experiences of his life. But he might have found his present state so meaningful with some many people by his side if he had utilized his youth in a meaningful way. On the other hand, he might have started cursing himself if he had wasted his youthful days meaninglessly. To make the old age painful or joy some is all up to us.

23. 2074 partial D Q. No. 3a.

Write an essay on "An old man remember". [10]

Please refer to **2075 Set A Q. No. 3a**

24. 2060 Q. No. 12

Write an essay on Youth and Age. [10]

Youth and Age

A man experiences different phases of his life during the course of his living. At one mode, he lives a life of youth while at other a life of age. During his youth, he finds his childhood lovely but while he grows old he begins to love his youth. This is human nature to romanticize something that is his past. An old man has all to do is to look into his past and find his age painful since he loses his youth, his friends and lovers. A man of the age remembers his energetic youth and in doing so starts comparing it with his present age. He finds his all energy dried, muscles and limbs weakened and all other bodily parts deformed. He begins to compare himself with a broken tree' the way W.B Yeats Old Pensioner does. An aged man wants to be beautiful and handsome again. As man ages, he looks on the mirror and doesn't recognize himself. He looks for the wrinkles and white or gray hair. Since none of the human being finds it comfortable to accept the realities imposed upon him by time, he bemoans on the loss, thus wishes to be young again- an impossible wish. Second area where his mind engages with is his old friends. An aged man is virtually neglected and ignored. Feeling lonely, and isolated, he starts reckoning the time he had spent with his friends. He begins to review his relations with his past friends and curses his age for he doesn't have friend to talk, share ideas and keep relations. He gets aware of the fact that some of his best friends have left him. Similarly, an aged man has his grandchildren to spend the time with. These damage irreparably his happiness and his desire of being young again. Third, an old man remembers all the love and fun he had. He remembers the time when he had all the women to love him. In this age they woo(महिला लाई फकाएर विवाह गर्ने प्रयत्न गर्नु) the women and get flustered by not getting their love in return because their ability to make love doesn't seem to come as easy as in the youth. He wonders what ha really happened to his youth. And he thinks he can never get the love of someone. He thinks himself "who could love me?" All what he did and who loved remain just in his memory. In the nutshell, youth and age are connected. An age man is always driven to his past age. In doing so has two things: one, he can find his age really pain and another, he can get satisfaction and consolation. An aged man achieves this second reality only why he has utilized his youth properly. He will not have anything to remorse and repent. Thus, if one has fully utilized his youth achieving all the goals and mission, she/he lives a meaningful aged too. He will have level of satisfaction which really helps him/her to be happy and cheerful.