



7. The encounter with the snake and the dual response of the poet to his presence at the water trough reflect a conflict between civilized social education and natural human instincts. The poet writes a diary entry highlighting how he was torn between the two voices. Write his diary.

Answer:

Dear Diary,

Today's entry is based upon my incidental meeting with a snake, yellow-brown in colour, who had come to drink water at the water-trough outside my house. To my surprise, I felt no fear, no aversion but a strange kind of bonding and fascination took possession of me. The snake was drinking water in a very relaxed manner and his majestic movements cast a spell on me. I stood there, with an empty pitcher, with no desire to disturb him. Since it was a very very hot day, I wanted the snake to have his fill, since he had come from a dark and horrible crack in the wall.

The reasoning of my mind, my rational and social belief told me to kill the snake, but my natural instincts told me not to. I don't know why, but my social education prompted me to kill the snake. I picked up a log and tried to strike the snake. The snake vanished at once, but a guilt, a void remained in my heart. I don't know why we submit before our egoism, ignorance, barbarity. O God! how I curse myself. What reason do we have to deprive others of their right to live? We preach of love and sympathy, yet we get misguided by our social beliefs and not natural instincts. I know snakes are poisonous but that snake had not harmed me and yet I behaved like a coward. Yes, I will have to make amends somehow. How! I wonder!

D.H. Lawrence

8. To what effect has the poet used these devices? How has it added to your understanding of the subject of the poem? You may record your understanding of snake characteristics under the following headings:

(a) Sound

(b) Movement

(c) Shape

Answer:

By using alliteration, sibilance and onomatopoeia, D.H. Lawrence has succeeded in creating a kind of visual and sensory effect on us. In line 'And trailed his yellow- brown slackness, soft-bellied down,' we feel the onomatopoeia effect in 'trailed', 'slackness', and 'soft-bellied down.' We almost hear both the sound and the movement of the snake. Equally in line 'And flickered his two- forked tongue,' /f/ sound (sibilance) and onomatopoeic effect in 'flickered' lend a visual and sensory movement to the snake.

In the line 'Softly drank through his straight/ gum, into this slack long body/ Silently', the /s/ sound conveys the snake's feature of the snake through sibilance. In doing so, the poet has been successful in bringing out the image of the snake through the sound, movement and shape. Another example of onomatopoeic word 'slowly' and /s/ sound indicates the use of sibilance, conveys this effect: 'And slowly turned his head,/ And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice a dream'.

9. The poet has also used both repetition and similes in the poem.

For example-'must wait, must stand and wait' (repetition) and 'looked at me vaguely as cattle do' (simile). Pick out examples of both and make a list of them in your notebooks.

Give reasons why the poet uses these literary devices.

Answer:

Repetition:

Hot, hot day;

Earth brown, earth golden;

Was it cowardice, was it perversity, was it humility;

I was afraid, I was most afraid;

And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice a dream.

Simile:

As drinking/ cattle do;

And lifted around like a god;

And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice a dream;

And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken;

and I, like a second comer;

like a king in exile;

he had come like a guest;

writhed like lightening.

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