



By Robert Frost

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1. What is a “dust of snow”? What does the poet say has changed his mood? How has the poet’s mood changed?

Answer:

A “dust of snow” means the fine particles of snow. This “dust of snow” changed the poet’s mood. The poet’s mood changed from that of dismay to joy. He was holding the day in regret when this dust of snow fell on him and this simple little thing brought him some joy.

2. How does Frost present nature in this poem? The following questions may help you to think of an answer.

(i) What are the birds that are usually named in poems? Do you think a crow is often mentioned in poems? What images come to your mind when you think of a crow?

(ii) Again, what is “a hemlock tree”? Why doesn’t the poet write about a more ‘beautiful’ tree such as a maple, or an oak, or a pine?

(iii) What do the ‘crow’ and ‘hemlock’ represent – joy or sorrow? What does the dust of snow that the crow shakes off a hemlock tree stand for?

Answer:

Frost has presented nature in quite an unconventional manner. While in other nature poems we come across birds such as nightingales or sparrows, Frost has used a crow in this poem. A crow can be associated with something dark, black, and foreboding. That is why other poets usually mention singing nightingales or beautiful white doves in their poems.

Also, the poet has written about a hemlock tree, which is a poisonous tree. He has not written about a more beautiful tree such as a maple, or oak, or pine because these trees symbolise beauty and happiness. Frost wanted to symbolise the feelings of sadness and regret, which is why he has used a hemlock tree.

The crow and the hemlock tree represent sorrow. The dust of snow that is shaken off the hemlock tree by the crow stands for joy that Frost experiences. He has, therefore, used an unconventional tree and bird in order to contrast them with joy in the form of snow.

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