

The Voice of the Rain

Solution of Questions on Page No 42:

Question 1:

1. There are two voices in the poem. Who do they belong to? Which lines indicate this?
2. What does the phrase “strange to tell” mean?
3. There is a parallel drawn between rain and music. Which words indicate this? Explain the similarity between the two.
4. How is the cyclic movement of rain brought out in the poem? Compare it with what you have learnt in science.
5. Why are the last two lines put within brackets?
6. List the pair of opposites found in the poem.

Answer:

1. The poem begins in a conversational tone. The two voices in the poem are the voice of the poet and the voice of the rain.

The lines that indicate the voice of the poet and the rain are, “And who art thou? Said I to the soft-falling shower,” and the lines that indicate the voice of the rain are, “I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain”.

2. The phrase “strange to tell” means that it is quite strange for the poet to believe and express in words that the soft-falling rain replied to his question. At the beginning of the poem, the poet inquires the rain about its identity, to which the rain replies that it is the ‘Poem of Earth’.

3. The lines, “I am the Poem of Earth”, said by the voice of the rain, reflects a connection between rain and poetry. This connection becomes more conspicuous in the final two lines,

“(For song, issuing from its birth-place, after fulfillment, wandering
Reck’d or unreck’d, duly with love returns)”.

In these lines, the poet draws similarities between rain and music observing that the life-cycle of rain and song are alike. The song issues from the heart of the poet and travels to reach others. It wanders and, whether heard and enjoyed or not, eventually returns to its creator with all due love. Similarly, rain originates from the earth, and after fulfilling its role of spreading beauty and purity, returns to its origin. Both are perpetual in nature. Moreover, the sound of the soft-falling rain is in itself a kind of music.

4. In the poem, the water rises from the ‘land and the bottomless sea’ to reach the sky. There, it transforms itself into vague formation of clouds, different in their structure than the water from which they originate. After wandering, these clouds descend to the earth in the form of rain to provide relief to the drought-ridden areas and infuse life into the unborn and latent seeds. The rain renders the earth with beauty and purity.

In science, we learn the cyclical process of rain in terms like evaporation, condensation, precipitation, flowing rivers, ground water and ocean water etc, while in the poem the same process becomes interesting and unusual. The rain speaks itself to describe its course. The poem puts forward how rain never loses its core essence even after changing into various forms.

5. The last two lines of the poem have been put within brackets as they do not form the part of the conversation between the poet and the rain.

The lines in the bracket indicate the reflections, observations and thoughts of the poet. He makes observations about the life-course of a song and draws similarities between the life-cycle of a song and rain.

6. (a) Day, night

(b) Reck’d, unreck’d

(c) Rise, descend

Question 2:

Notice the following sentence patterns.

- 1. And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower.**
- 2. I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain.**
- 3. Eternal I rise**
- 4. For song...duly with love returns**

Rewrite the above sentences in prose.

Answer:

1. I enquired the soft-falling rain about its identity.
2. The voice of the rain introduced itself as the Poem of Earth.
3. The voice of the rain explained its upward movement towards the sky as eternal.
4. The poet says that, similar to the natural cycle of the rain, a song originates from the heart of the poet, travels to reach others and after fulfilling its purpose (whether acknowledged or not), it returns to the poet with all due love.

Question 3:

Look for some more poems on the rain and see how this one is different from them.

Answer:

- (1) 'The Rainy Day' by Rabindranath Tagore.

(2) 'Song for the Rainy Season' by Elizabeth Bishop

(3) 'An Autumn Rain-Scene' by Thomas Hardy