

John Keats and Shiv Kumar Batalvi: Kings of Melancholy and Separation

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ABSTRACT

Writing sensuous poetry in two different languages, both poets speak of agony, pain, sorrow, and despair in human lives, conveying a strong relationship between love, beauty, and truth, with beauty being transient. Sufferings, the feelings of intense pains, drowning sorrows, and miserable failures in their love-lives did affect their literary works, but for the better as both wanted to give their best; perhaps aware of the paucities of times allotted to them by the Almighty as they were born for transcended imagination in their poetries. Their handsomeness proved that beauty is short-lived. The 'Lady-luck' did smile on both, but alas! Both lost it.

KEYWORDS: Amrita Pritam, Fanny Brawne Luna, Ode to Nightingale, Romanticism.

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WHY THIS STUDY?

The idea behind taking up this study is that the two poets born 140 years apart in two countries, England and India, who would think and speak in other languages, yet most of their poetic thoughts, coincide. The common characteristics of the poems of both poets were that they are laden with agony, separation, melancholy, sadness, and despair, as both met with failures in their respective love affairs, which might have made them develop such feelings. The failure in love eventually became a grievous torment for both poets. Distrust and disillusionment in their beliefs also changed their viewpoints towards the world, which is very well exhibited in their writings. But, thankfully, their creative genius became more outpouring during the last years of their short lives.

INTRODUCTION

Shiv Kumar Batalvi's poetry showed a continuous progression from the early pangs of Birrah (Separation from loved ones) to increasingly complex emotions and different reactions to his inner sufferings and towards society at large. His sense of identity also passed through many changes from his first collection of poems, 'Peeran Da Paraga' (A Handful of Pains, 1960), to his last major work, 'Mein Te Mein' (Me and Myself, 1970). In between, he published Luna, Lajwanti (Touch Me Not; 1961), 'Atte Dian Chirian' (The Sparrows of Flour, 1962), 'Menu Vida Karo' (Bide Me Farewell, 1963). Luna (1965)- a dramatic poem of epic dimensions where he 're-interprets' the most popular legend of Puran Bhagat by making Luna, not Puran, as the moral center of the poem, a severe indictment of a male-centered Indian society based on the subjugation of women by men. 'Luna' (1965) [1, 2] brought Batalvi into the ranks of the leading poets and writers of the Punjabi Language, Professor Mohan Singh who called Batalvi, the "Keats of Punjab" and Ms. Amrita Pritam named him a "Prince of Lovers" or "Shehzada-e-Dard" in Punjabi, which translates to "Prince of Pain" or "Prince of Suffering".[3] Luna is considered a cornerstone of Punjabi literature, where Batalvi gave shape to a "new short-play form to the centuries-old 'Kissa' of Puran Bhagat", which won him the Sahit Academy Award to become the youngest writer of that time (1967) to receive this coveted award.[4] Of the over 220 poems, many of Shiv's poems such as: Me and Me', 'Prayer', Flowers of Albizia Lebec', 'Aching Sighs', 'Sorrow', 'Farewell', 'Sultan of Birrah(Separation)', Choicest Poems of Batalvi by Amrita Pritam's, and A complete Set of Batalvi's Poems, were published after his death.

He kept on harping on death all his life because in his poems, the desire to die, the sorrow of separation, and the feeling of pain are very intense. He also went on to write poems on love, beauty, and nature. Many of his contemporaries also say that Shiv had fallen deeply in love with a girl which could not be matured. But Batalvi never admitted it. Yet many of his poems hint at his unfinished love story, and no reader of Batalvi can deny that the feeling of 'longing and pain' is intense in his poems. In a brief span of 36 years, life played him a strange turnabout.

John Keats, the eldest among the four siblings of Thomson Keats, a stable keeper, and Francis Jennings, was born on 31 December 1795 at Moorgate, London, England during the Second Generation of the Romanticism'; the period which he shared with the 'Literary Greats of the likes Persey Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron. He got four years of a productive literary period, as for many years, he remained afflicted with tuberculosis, and died of it in 26th year Yet, he is counted among the 'Greats' of 'the Romantic Poets'; rubbing his shoulders with all-time Greats Romantic Poet' William Wordsworth 'of the 'First Period of Romanticism' and 'P.B. Shelly', his friend and contemporary'. His love-drenched, sensuous poetry continues to touch the love-cords of young lovers of the last three centuries.

After Keats's father died, his mother remarried soon thereafter, leaving the four kids to be brought up by their grandmother. He studied at the John Clarke School in Enfield and befriended the headmaster's son, Charles Cowden Clarke, who remained his friend and mentor throughout his life. He was awarded the duly certified license to practice as a medical assistant in December 1916. But Keats had decided not to join the medical profession and opted to become a poet.

In 1816, Keats published his first poem, a Sonnet, entitled 'O Solitude'. In October of the same year, he published another Sonnet entitled: 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer. Keats dedicated his first Sonnet to Leigh Hunt, who published it in his magazine 'The Examiner'. It was Hunt who made Keats known to the literary world. Next year (1817), he published his first Poetic Volume entitled: 'Poems', including one of his famous poems: 'Sleep and Poetry', which, sadly, turned out to be a 'critical failure'. He also published his essay (1918) 'The Three Young Poets': Shelley, Reynolds, and Keats.

Keats was attracted to 'Isabella Jones'(1817), who inspired him and suggested some themes, enabling Keats to write three classic poems: 'Eve of St Agnes', 'The Eve of St Mark', and 'Bright Star.'

In November 1818, Keats met Ms. Frances Fanny Brawne and fell madly in love with her and all his desires remained concentrated on her till death, though the darkness, disease, and depression had surrounded him. Frustrated, Keats wrote his master -piece 'La Belle Dame sans Merci', which reflects his failure in love; though this poem made Keats immortal.

Thereafter, Keats wrote one of his important poems: 'Endymion' and described it as a 'trial of my powers of imagination' [5] and dedicated it to Thomas Chatterton. It is tragic that the 'Endymion' was severely criticized, especially by John Wilson Croker in a literary magazine, 'The Quarterly Review', while John Gibson Lockhart of 'The Blackwood's Magazine' [6] described it as "*imperturbable driveling idiocy*". Not stopping here, Lockhart coined the term Cockney School, [6], a derogatory one for the three poets: Hunt, Hazlitt, and Keats, as none among them was highly educated, nor did they have any academic degree, and were also not elitists.

While nursing his younger brother Tom, who was already suffering from tuberculosis, he also got afflicted with this disease. His doctor advised him to move to a place with a warm climate. He shifted to Italy and started living in Rome with his friend Joseph Severn, who dutifully nursed him. But alas! John Keats also fell victim to his family disease, tuberculosis, and breathed his last on 23 February 1821 in the lap of his dear friend .

He was buried in a 'Protestant Cemetery in Rome' where his epitaph was engraved: "*Here lies one whose name is writ in water*" - 23 February 1821.

Other than poetry, Keats is also known for his letters, notes, and chapters which he wrote to his friends, contemporaries, brother, and a sister.[7] These letters were highly appreciated by one and all of his friends and contemporaries for the richness of their literary content. In his last letter, he wrote to his schoolmate, stating, "I have a habitual feeling of my real-life having passed, and I am leading a posthumous existence. [7] Keats wrote to his friend 'Benjamin Barley', "What imagination seizes as beauty must be truth". [8]

Keats's recognition as a sensory poet rose rapidly after his death.[9] By the end of the century, he was placed on the Canon of English Literature, [10] strongly influencing many writers; he was mentioned in the Encyclopaedia Britannica of 1888, and one of his Odes was selected as 'one of the final masterpieces'. His Ode on the 'Nightingale', 'Ode on Grecian Urn', and the Sonnet 'Sleep and Poetry' also found a mention. [11-12] 'To Autumn', composed by Keats in 1819, called 'the most perfect ode', is the most highly rated poem in the English Language written by John Keats.[13,14] Luis Borges named his first encounter with Keats as the one whose effect 'he had experienced throughout his life'. Seven weeks after the funeral of Keats, the Great Shelley (P.B) had memorialized Keats in his poem 'Adonis's despairing elegy' stating that Keats's early death was a personal and public tragedy: The loveliest and the last bloom, whose petals nipped before they blew, died on the promise of fruit.[15] He became famous for his poetry as an important figure of English Literature only after his death, but is considered a 'great revealing poet of his time, in some ways, many-sided.

Keats's poetry is a combination of sensuous love, passion, lyricism, beauty in varied charms, benison nature, his longing for death which brought agony, melancholy, sorrow, fear and despair, yet is always aesthetic, philosophical and humanitarian which talks about morality, the mutability of life and the pleasure with beauty being synonymous with Truth and Love; nonetheless, is temporary and transient. He also talked about poetry itself. His poems are unique, which appeal to our five senses: eyes, ears, touch, smell, and taste. Like all romantic poets, Keats, though, was an escapist in the beginning; later became a realist. But the cult of love and beauty transfigured everything into beauty that he would touch with the magic hand of choice.

Dichotomy became a part and parcel of Batalvi's life, like Ms. Amrita Pritam calling him a "Prince of Pain", but his poetry is studied under the period of Romanticism. With no academic degree, he became the youngest recipient of the 'Sahit Academy Award'. He tried to overcome his sorrow, despair, and separation from his ladylove by getting addicted to drinking, which proved fatal for him.

DISCUSSION

The two genius poets, who wrote original poetry in two languages (English and Punjabi), one and a half centuries apart, yet the reader, will find many of their thoughts resonate. A strange coincidence!

A few examples are given here:

Note: The English translation of many of Batalvi's stanzas is taken from one done by Ms. Suman Kashyap.

'It's the peak noon ahead,

And my shadow has almost disappeared

Graves wait for me like mothers,

That waits for her sons" [Batalvi: Graves are Waiting (Stanza-I)]

The poet, being sick of his life, imagines graves like mothers who anxiously wait for their sons to come back from their work. Batalvi continues on and on----

*"The ground of life is smeared
And my being likes a tree alone,
There is a dusty lull of grief,
And stormy winds of sorrow,
What strange, wretched tree I have become
Whose shade has completely been eaten by him?
Grave awaits me like a mother
Waits for her son"* [Batalvi: Graves are Waiting (Stanza-I)]

*"Lacs come to listen to my songs
But none has ever seen my pain,
Lakhs did kiss my forehead,
But no one recognized me now by face.
I am now trying to hide myself from the same face,
Grave waits for me like a mother awaits her son."* [Batalvi: Graves are Waiting (Stanza-3)]

His desire to die is so intense that he invents different arguments for his preference for death over life. Keats also finds solace in a grave, rather than living in this world. He wrote to his ladylove, 'This world is too brutal for me. I am glad there is such a thing as the grave. I am sure I shall never have any rest till I get there. If I am destined to be happy with you here, how short is the longest life? I wish to believe in immortality and live with you here forever. He continues, "I wish she could invent some means to make me all happy without you. Every hour, I am more and more concentrated in you - - I cannot leave you and shall never taste one minute's content until it pleases chances to let me live with you for good-- -." I am glad-- - get there." He continues, "I wish it were either your arms full of faith or a thunderbolt would strike me". [Keats' letter to his *lady-love*, Ms. Fanny Brawne, from Rome, August of 1820]

Tragically, Keats breathed his last on 23 February 1821, i.e., just 6 months after this letter.

Batalvi, on the other hand, was hell-bent on suffering pain and frustration, and would always wait for death, and never talked of hope.

Keats continues on and on - - -

*"This living hand, now warm and capable
Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold
And the icy silence of the tomb,
So haunt thy days and chill thy
Dreaming nights
That thou would wish thine own heart dry of blood
So in my vein, red light might stream again,
And though be conscious- calm'd- see here it is—
I hold it towards you."*

*"So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights
That thou wouldst wish thine own heart dry of blood
So in my vein red life might stream again."* [Keats: This Living Hand (Stanzas-I, II)]

The two stanzas depict death as chilling and the grief as agonizing. Not yet dead, Keats imagines haunting those who survive him and the reanimated survivors because he also wanted to keep holding her hand. The speaker's complex phrasing makes the line, "I hold it towards you," seem to refer both to the living and the dead hand, though it technically refers only to the first.

The poet Batalvi's mind is happy to see butterflies of different colors and shapes, and the perfume-like fragrance of flowers captivates his mind. He tries to catch the butterflies. He is about to catch them when suddenly a guilty conscience comes to the poet's mind (that I am ending the freedom of the butterflies), which makes his heart beat faster, and his happiness disappears. He realizes that moments of pleasure come very unexpectedly, and even then, they remain for a few moments.

*"Flowers of sin like some black sun
Bloom in my dreams,
Their perfume-sudden fragrance
Spreading through each heartbeat"* [Batalvi: 'Butterflies' (Lines: 16-19)]

Keats also develops analogous thoughts

*"But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all"* [Keats: Ode to Melancholy' (Stanza-II)]

Keats climbs a blossoming apple tree and lies down on its spreading branches, laden with delicate white and pink flowers. He stays there for half a day, staring at the sky. Poems that have fragrance and flavor fly over his head. Suddenly, a fly falls into the jug to make him sad and melancholic, implying that the moments of happiness the poet tries to catch are fragile.

Batalvi expresses his sense of sorrow at a different time as given below

"Either this night of sorrow is long,

*Or my songs are interminable,
Neither this dreadful night ends,
Nor do my songs cease" [Batalvi: 'A Night of Sorrow' (Stanza-I)]*

Batalvi had experienced love, separation, and the pain and sorrow that come with it. So, he has penned down the moments of this painful sorrow. Describing such a night of pain and sorrow, He wrote: "Either this night of separation is very long or my songs of longing are very long. Neither this miserable night end nor do my (painful) songs end. There is a never-ending loving relationship between the two. As if *I and sorrow* have become lovers of each other."

And look, how Keats speaks about sorrow---

*"To sorrow I bade good morrow,
And thought to leave her far away behind,
But cheerily, she loves me dearly,
She is so constant to me and so kind,
I would deceive her and so leave her, but
She is so constant, so kind". [Keats: 'To Sorrow' (Stanza-IV)]*

Keats used a lot of ironical and unexpected words like *cheerily* *dearly* and *kind* to describe *Sorrow* which is analogous to *tongue-in -cheek*, implying that he is constantly plagued by Sorrow, i. e., he is in love with *her* (symbolic sensuous love) as she is Keats's a loyal companion. So it is hard for him to shake off Sorrow and leave her far away; metaphorically, he is addicted to 'Sadness'.

Please find another thought of Batalvi as follows:

"One day there will come a storm

Destroying all our nests

I will become homeless and fearless" [Batalvi: 'Wish I Were a Bird'! (Stanza-II)]

The poet sadly thinks that it may happen that one day such a storm (dust-filled wind) will come that will turn my house into a pile of rubble, and I will have to wander from house to house, homeless.

And Keats have already expressed a similar thought one and a half century ago:

*"Their flowers have no scent, birds no sweet songs,
And great, unerring Nature once seems wrong" [Keats: Bright Star (Last Stanza)]*

These lines are taken from Keats's poem *Bright Star*, which he had been writing for his girlfriend *Fanny Brawne*. But his health (due to tuberculosis) had been deteriorating. Suddenly, he was informed that his brother's wife was pregnant, and the couple wanted to migrate to America. Keats gets highly strung at the thought of their contemplating living in a far-off country. 'Suddenly, he loses the rhythm of his love poem and exclaims(imagining his brother standing in front)' that country is no good to live in as the flowers which grow there have no fragrance and the birds do not sing sweet songs as the Nature (God) is not kind to that land'.

- We continue talking about the similarities in the poetic thought Keats and Batalvi

*"In the garden of life,
Grazes upon a sampling of pain
The deer of songs
The winds of separation
Blow through the night
Here and there, a leaf falls". [Batalvi: 'The Garden of Life (Stanza-I)]*

Imagining life as a garden where the deer grazes the plants of pain by singing songs and blows away the winds of separation throughout the night, and the pain subsides.

Keats conveys the same feeling as follows:

*"A partner in your sorrow's mysteries,
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul". [Keats: Ode on Melancholy (Stanza-1)]*

Melancholy is the depository of pain. The poet is trying to overpower 'sorrow's mysteries' and 'drown the wakeful anguish of the soul'. He tries to hide it by using some poetic metaphors that soothe him like a drug drug to make him feel drowsy and thus alone. He gets wrapped up in a blanket of emotions around his pain rather than a clear and penetrating experience of' wakeful anguish' that stirs his emotions.

Find another thought of Batalvi as follow:

*"One is that you have musk
The other is you are in great pain*
The third is that your appearance is beautiful
And your words are pleasing" [Batalvi: The Garden of Life (Stanza-V)]*

The fragrant musk lying in the navel of the deer spreads fragrance far off in the jungle. Hunters and other animals would smell and, i.e., want to kill it. So, it is on its toes. So, it keeps running to save its life, which has always been painful.

Look how philosophically, Keats explains the Sorrow:

"She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;

And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips,

Bidding adieu, and aching pleasure nigh". [John Keats: 'Ode on Melancholy' (Stanza-III)]

She is a beauty in herself; the beauty that must die one day is not long-lasting. There is happiness in life but it is tight-lipped; it knows the reality but won't speak. The pain is also sitting beside. When the beauty leaves, so does the happiness. And there remains nothing but the pain, which gives you a very piercing type of pleasure. A pain that feels good, too!

Both the poets convey the same feeling of frustration on being dejected or having been separated from their Ladylove:

"The pain that you gifted to love

Was the pain finally that consumed 'Shiv' "[Batalvi: You Bade Goodbye (Last Stanza)]

I cannot exist without you. I am forgetful of everything but seeing you again. My life seems to stop there. I see no further. You have absorbed me. I have a sensation at the present moment that I am dissolving. I should, though, be miserable without the hope of soon seeing you. [Keats's letter to his girlfriend, Ms. Fanny Brawne in October 1819]

Both poets convey the feeling of frustration that had made their hearts its home as follows:

"Oh Lord,

"Please loan me a few more songs.

My fire is dying,

Please give me a spark" [Batalvi: A Borrowed Song (Stanza-III)]

As every reader of Punjabi Literature knows, Batalvi's health was not good; he was not afraid of death. Rather, he kept on playing the flute of death all his life. But there was a longing in his mind that he still had to write more poems. He says to God, " I know my life is about to end, but give me more time to write more songs. These songs are blessing to me.

Keats has his own way of conveying the sadness.

"- - Then on the shore

Of the wide world, I stand alone, and think [Keats: 'When I Have Fears That I May Cease to be' (Last 3 Lines)]

Keats was aware that he had tuberculosis, which had consumed his mother and brother ' Tom'. Having been a surgeon's assistant, he knew that death could occur to him at any time. He was apprehensive that he might not be able to finish his poems. So, many of his poems explore the idea of death and immortality.

These lines are also relevant to those who seek the meaning of life and can be applied to millions of intellectuals who are committed to achieving what is close to their hearts, but face disheartening situations, leading to some extent of the feeling of morbidity.

Still another way of expressing their frustration by the two poets

"How much life has passed and how much is left,

This is what I keep on counting". [Batalvi: Your Youthfulness Has Consumed Me (Stanza-II)]

Batalvi had a deep attachment to death. As long as he lived, he kept on beating death. In these two lines, he is seen saying the same thing; he is always busy with the calculation, as he does not know when death will come. The pain of failure in love made him a leading poet of Punjabi, but it took away his youth and life and gave his family a never-ending pain.

Keats conveys a tragic understanding, offering the wisdom of a life fully lived and even already lived beyond. Besides writing poetry, Keats would write letters to his friends, contemporary poets, his younger brother, and his sister. These letters are known for their literary content and originality.

"How long will this posthumous life last?" [Keats's letter to his friend Charles Brown (30 November 1820)]

This philosophical line was written by Keats to his friend Charles Brown in England while Keats was staying in Rome (Italy) with another friend, Severn, during his convalescence from Tuberculosis. The above line is included in one of the paragraphs of the letter on 30 November 1820, just over two and a half months before his death on 23 February 1821.

The paragraph goes, 'I have a habitual feeling of my real life having passed, and I am leading a posthumous existence. God knows how it would have been - but it appeared to me - however, I will speak on that-- - - -

It is Batalvi's way of warding off the feelings of pain and frustration:

"Listen, deer, don't be afraid,

The leaves of pain,

It will not always stay green

They grow easily

The sampling of pain" [Batalvi: The Garden of Life (Stanza-IV)]

Conveying a man while speaking to a deer, the poet says, "Do not be afraid of suffering. Difficult and painful times do not last forever".

And Keats conveys it analogous way.

"How strange it is that man on earth should roam

And lead a life of woe, but not forsake?

*His rugged path, nor dare he view alone
His future doom which is but to await'
Remain so filled with perfume" [Keats: 'On Death' (Last Stanza)]*

The poet tells us that we should not, time and again, talk about death. If we ignore this thinking, humans would get used to death. He also forbids human beings from giving up, i.e., should not think of committing suicide. Even though life may bring about suffering and woes, we must continue to keep treading this rugged path because life must be carried on at all stages of life, and there will be trials. But when death arrives, all obstacles will be gone forever.

Life has to be lived, irrespective of its being painful, says the poet Batalvi:

*"We all know that life has to be lived
That pain has been sewn into it" [Batalvi: A Borrowed Song (Stanza-III)]*

And Keats agrees with him, in a quote from his poem **Endymion**, as given below:
'Pleasure is oft a visitant, but pain clings cruelly to us like gnawing sloth'

Happiness sometimes comes to us only, but pain sticks to us like gnawing laziness, like cruelty.

"I would like to ride

On the chariot of suicide

But I don't know where to pay the fare

Of my cowardice" [Batalvi's Couplet]

The poet says that sometimes the idea of committing suicide comes to his mind. But I ridicule myself, realizing who would pay the rent for the time I would have lived and have taken the breaths? In a way, the poet feels ashamed of his cowardice in dying by suicide.

And Keats said so over 140 years ago.

"His rugged path, nor dare he view alone

His future doom, which, is but to await" [Keats: On Death (Last Stanza)]

Despair in life may bring about sufferings and woes. But we must come out of this fear of treading the rugged path boldly.

'In this season, the trees are leafless

Has no warmth.

Without-fragrance

In this season, the sun of my happiness

Even more-bitter

Is my youth

Tell me, O mother

What to do

With my bitter youth" [Batalvi: A Widowed Season (Stanza-II)]

The poet is calling the autumn season the *widow season*.

Because of this, neither the leaves on the trees nor the flowers of the plants have any fragrance. The poet feels that no joy is left in life, nor is there any warmth in his blood. Worse still, his youth has also gone. As it happens, the poet is filled with anger and despair.

Keats has already correlated these thoughts in the following lines

'His soul has its autumn when his wings

He furled close; contented so to look

On the mist in idleness, to let fair things

Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook". [Keats: The Human Seasons (Lines: 9-12)]

We first give their line-wise meaning: The poet compares the four stages of man with the four seasons. After summer, there comes autumn, when the dryness of human skin starts. Then it peels off from the human body, just as the leaves fall off the trees and plants. By the time contentment comes, man may look on 'mist in idleness', i.e., he is at peace with what may not appear clearly about the things to come. He is now reconciled and has let go of the good times that he has spent.

In conclusion, the man in the autumn seems to be waiting, but is no longer driven by his delights.

"The hidden idea of Keats is a Subtle, Imaginative, and Philosophical rendition of Keats's premonition about death, which to him is a welcome relief rather than a negative moment of existence, as he undoubtedly believes in a blissful post-corporeal existence.

Darkness and despair surround both the poets and they express this feeling in their own way, as follows:

"The sun you stole

Was yours.

My home, from the day of my birth,

Has been in the darkness" [Batalvi: A Request (Last Stanza)]

So, do not consider yourself guilty that you have stolen many things from my house as it was already empty and was in complete darkness, i.e. you have not lost anything from me as I had nothing except the darkness of sorrow.

And Keats, the genius, had already said so:

"O Darkness! Darkness!

Ever must I moan?

To question Heaven and Hell and

Heart in vain" [Keats: Why Did I Laugh Today (Lines: 7-10)]

Both the poets find beauty and innocence in Womanhood, correlated in such beautiful words that need no further explanation.

"Her face is

Like a fairy

Her soul is

Just like Mary

She laughs- flowers falling

She walks like a gazelle

Tall and slender like a cypress: [Batalvi: A Girl (6 Lines)]

"She was a Goddess of the infant world,

By her statue the tall Amazon"

'She was the goddess of the world of children

Slender and tall like a cypress". [Keats: Hyperion (Stanza-III; Book-I)]

Both the poets talk of the illusion that the "deepened sorrow" will leave a human being, as explained in their couplets respectively.

"It is an illusion that life

Remains for a moment or two

And then falls asleep

If the bird of the heart of sorrow

Blows out of the thick forest" [Batalvi: A Sighing Female Camel (Stanza-IV)]

It is an illusion that life takes a small nap and bird of sorrow, which remains embedded in your heart, would fly away in between to roam about in the forest, i.e., the intense pain in your heart never leaves you

"To take into the air my quiet breath

Now more than ever seems it rich to die

To cease upon the midnight with no pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad

In such ecstasy!

Still wouldst though sing, and I have ears in vain-

To thy high requiem become a sod" [Keats: Ode to a Nightingale]

Keats, a sensuous love poet, mixes sensuousness with idealism to convey the above- mentioned idea of Batalvi as follows:

He imagines that Nightingale would continue singing even after his death, as if nothing had happened. His corpse, no doubt, still has ears with it, but would not listen to her song because there was no brain to 'process' its sounds. In a way, the bird would sing a requiem, a kind of church service where the music is sung for the dead person. The same thing is happening here because neither Nightingale knows about poet death nor would the dead body hear, i.e. an inanimate object like a piece of grassy soil called "sod".

Analogous feelings are conveyed by two poets in their respective, following given couplets

"The dirty light of my face,

Who will kiss and who will like

My friend,

What for do I live now?"

Now no one will read or like what I have written.

My fame is gone.

For what should I live?" [Batalvi: A Dear Friend]

"Of the wide world I stand alone, and think

Till love and name to nothingness do sink" [Keats: When I fear That I May Cease to Be (Last 2 lines)]

I stand alone in this vast world and think that love and fame will be in vain.

Both poets talk about the indestructibility of the human soul and, thereby, an unending cycle of life and death as follows

'Living and dying are karma,

Why regret, O' man?

The soul is destined to change

And it is called immortal'. [Batalvi: Loona (A Short play)]

"An uneasy, yet necessary truth-

For the shadow holds no secrets and

Whispers with a cold and quiet breath-,

And it is: There is beauty even in Death". [Keats: Hyperion (Book-II)]

The passage reflects that acknowledging death and its potential beauty, although unsettling, is necessary for a deeper understanding of life. It emphasizes the quiet and almost chilling nature of the truth, which shadows us all. The phrase "beauty even in death" suggests recognition of the cyclical nature of life and the potential for transcendence or peace beyond the physical realm.

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