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The Passionate Shepherd To His Love”	عنوان المحاضرة باللغة العربية
An Introduction to 16 th .century English poetry	عنوان المحاضرة باللغة الانكليزية
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What is the main idea of The Passionate Shepherd to His Love?

In his poem “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love,” Marlowe introduces the central idea of the relationship between humans and nature by establishing the crucial role of the natural world in the shepherd's invitation to his love

Christopher Marlowe's ballad “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” is probably one of the most well-known poems or, as Mallory Ortberg calls it, “The Most Frequently Owned-Upon Poem In History.” In class we learn about Marlowe's pastoral love poem but we barely scratch the surface of the complicated and fascinating

The title “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” refers to the love of a shepherd for his beloved, based on his romantic ideals of presenting her the beauty of the idyllic world in which he is living. The poem opens with the popular romantic line, “Come live with me, and be my love.” Obviously, he is addressing his beloved. He wants her to come and experience pleasures as he says, “we will all the pleasures prove.”

The shepherd describes the setting in detail: “That valleys, groves, hills, and fields, / Woods, or steepy mountain yields.” He then makes a promise to her in the next stanza, saying “we will sit upon the rocks, / seeing the shepherds feed their flocks.” The lure of the natural setting—of singing birds, nearby waterfalls, and mountains—is sure to be highly attractive to a beloved.

The poem continues with the shepherd’s future gifts that he will present to his lover: “I will make thee beds of roses.” The poet has used a word pun in the next phrase “a thousand fragrant posies” where “posies” has a double meaning: it both refers to poetry as well as a bunch of flowers in Renaissance terms. In addition, he has used floral imagery to suggest fertility of the countryside. Amid this romantic setting, the shepherd says that he would make “a cap of flowers, and a kirtle” to demonstrate his love, adding further that he would also make a gown for her “of the finest wool.”

The use of a poetic device known as blazon is highly suggestive here. A blazon is the method through which the speaker praises his beloved, singling out parts of her body with the help of metaphors. His arguments appeal to the senses and give feelings of pleasure and love, stating “A belt of straw, and ivy buds, / with coral clasps and amber studs.” Following this, the shepherd adds sexual overtones to the stanza by repeating the word “pleasures” in “And if these pleasures may thee move,” whereas “move” here implies emotions.

His last promise is that “The shepherds’ swains shall dance and sing, / For thy delight each May morning.” This is the final push to coax his beloved to “live with me and be my love” which is his ultimate objective.

Structural Analysis

“The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” is penned as a love poem in the pastoral lyric tradition, containing six quatrains with rhyming couplets. The rhyme scheme is AABB:

Come live with me and be my love, A
And we will all the pleasures prove A
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields, B
Woods, or steepy mountain yields. B

The meter and beat is regular, which is iambic tetrameter as in “By shallow rivers, to whose falls, / Melodious birds sing madrigals.” The majority of lines are written in iambic tetrameter, though a few lines are in modified trochaic tetrameter such as “Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks” (the modification is that the line ends on a stressed beat). The meter provides a great deal of music and creates flow in the poem.

Enjambment is present in almost all the stanzas such as in “A gown made of the finest wool / Which from our pretty lambs we pull.” The poet has used hypotaxis to further describe

the bed of roses by adding several other things as subordinate clauses: “And a thousand fragrant posies, / A cap of flowers, and a kirtle, / embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.”

The diction is figurative, as the poet uses several images and metaphors. Furthermore, feminine rhyme is used to create special effects such as “There will I make thee beds of roses.” There is a rhyming word at the end of the line which contains two syllables, while the final syllable is unstressed.

Love plays a major role in this poem, as the opening line encourages readers to think of it in terms of romantic interest. The lover in the poem makes promises to his beloved about how they can live a romantic and ideal life in the countryside. The fanciful nature and energy of youth can be seen in “the passionate shepherd” as a lover. Thus, lovers can use quotes to send to their beloveds in this way:

“Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove.”

They can also show their promises by imagining making beds of roses and saying,

“And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.”