

Juxtaposition of fervent love in “Red is the Rose” and “Fuchsia Shock”

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Abstract

The research paper Juxtaposition of Fervent Love in “Red is the Rose” and “Fuchsia Shock” intends to compare and delineate the fervent love found in “Red is the Rose” and “Fuchsia Shock”. The work of art “Red is the Rose” is an Irish ballad of dignified and passionate love and “Fuchsia Shock” is a fervent love poem of Indian English Literature. Therefore, they have a path to compares and contrast the underlying differences and sameness, thereupon, the research paper aims to sketch out the similarities and dissimilarities of the ballad “Red is the Rose” and the poem “Fuchsia Shock”. The excruciating voices of both the narrators of the “Red is the Rose” and “Fuchsia Shock” are specified with reference to their yearning spirit. In addition, the paper also depicts the sweetness of passionate love by stressing the distinctness of the ballad and the poem.

Keywords: Fervent Love, ballad, poem, agony

*I bloom for you
That I might die for you
Not to create seed
But to have
These rose petals
To place at your feet*

--Mia Rose

Jim Al-Khalili defines biologically love as a powerful neurological condition like hunger or thirst, only more permanent. Generally, it is treated as being blind or unconditional, in the sense that one has no control over it. It is a strong feeling and is found in every living creature. Many writers have expressed their love by making avail of hypnotized language; the ballad “Red is the Rose” and the poem “Fuchsia Shock” also delineate such a similar theme. Both the works of art appear to be celebrating pure and single-minded love.

“Red is the Rose” is a traditional Irish ballad of anonymous origin which has been sung to the same tune of the famous Scottish song “Loch Lomond” and similar in theme. The leitmotif of the ballad is fervent love. “Red is the Rose” has two supposed origin stories: either written by C. Mordaunt Spencer, a lyricist and Charles William Glover, a composer in 1800s, or composed by William P. Mulchinock, a young protestant has fallen madly in love with Mary O’ Connor, a catholic girl who has worked as a maid for Mulchinock’s parents. “Fuchsia Shock” is a poem by Llavenil Meena Kandasamy, an Indian poetess, fiction writer, translator and activist. She was born in 1984 and based in Chennai, Tamilnadu. Her works revolve around feminism and the anti-caste Caste Annihilation Movement of the contemporary Indian milieu. In, addition she also deals with linguistic identity.

The first part of “Fuchsia Shock” appears to be the lamentation of the nameless feminine narrator. And the second part displays the request and plea of the narration. Immediately having completed her grievance, she prays to save her form the excruciating clutches. Her request is

explicit: “Save me, from this / unbearable starkness” “Fuchsia Shock” (15, 16). She pleads him to shower love in abundance upon her so that she can experience the desired life. But the first part of the ballad “Red is the Rose” delineates the romantic love of the ladylove and the second part depicts her passionate love. It illustrates the steadfast and unshared love with respect to her dedicated life for her partner. She also suggests and pleads her lover to reach her.

On comparison, “Red is the Rose” and “Fuchsia Shock” deal with the similar theme: fervent love. They also highlight the agony of the ladyloves’ in their separation and loneliness. “Red is the Rose” and “Fuchsia Shock” portray platonic love and they also mark the similarities of some other features. The poem and the ballad appear to be monologue of female voices. Ladyloves of both the works of art delineate their suffering as well as their love. The narrations of the works define their love for their partners. Both the pieces of art portray the heart melting sentiment. ‘Long waiting’ can be another identical theme between them.

“Red is the Rose” springs out with the metaphorical depiction of love. It also stresses the function of simile in contrasting the fair love with rose and lily. The narrator of the ballad says her love is better than a red rose of the garden, fairer than the lily of the valley and clearer than the transparent flowing water. The following lines of the ballad delineate the narrator’s depiction of her passionate love.

Red is the rose that in yonder garden grows,
And fair is the lily of the valley
Clear is the water that flows from the Boyne
And my love is fairer than any “Red is the Rose” (1-4)

The ballad begins with a beautiful and aesthetic scene of nature but whereas the poem “Fuchsia Shock” starts with the grim narration of the passionate ladylove. At the initial part, it scents a sad and loneliness odour. Though the ballad and the poem have an identical theme and subject, they are delineated and styled differently.

In “Fuchsia Shock”, the narrator brings out her melancholic mood by throwing light on the passionate love and her

separation from her lover. In her loneliness, she spends time with textbooks, thus, she says that her bed smells of text books. Her restrained mood keeps her aloof from dreaming about sunlight and sky's embrace. She narrates that it has been a month since she has dreamt of nature's beauty. This also reveals that her grief has been instigated and raised to a great extent that she could not notice the habitual happenings. She has lost her woman's lush, vanity and shining beauty due to her loneliness. Her pathetic condition is explicit in the following lines:

My bed smells of textbooks
 And it is more than a month or so,
 Since I dreamt of sunlight and the sky's
 Embrace. Even a woman's lush vanities—
 Scarlet silk and shining gold — have been lost
 On me. I am snared in a world of aqua...
 "Fuchsia Shock" (1-6)

In desperate mood, she confesses that she is snared. It unfolds the fact; her lover's absence has bound her with the shackles of grief out of which she is unable to be relieved. This stresses the disintegrated spirit of the narrator with regard to her shattered romantic dreams. It also covertly indicates the strength of her love. She has employed the grim word 'imprisoned' to illustrate her position. Sharing the grief out of her lover's absence is that of sharing her slavery. His absence has brought emptiness and saturation of life. Although it has been only one month of separation, the narrator feels it as a prolonged absence and laments over it. She adds that she has relished the taste of saturation of grief.

The similarity between the ballad and the poem is that they display request. In "Fuchsia Shock", the lines "Dearest, lavish your love / in slender earthtone shades" (24, 25) explicate the requisition of the narrator. Similarly, in the ballad the requisition of the ladylove is explicit in "Come over the hills my bonny Irish lad / Come over the hills to your darling;" "Red is the Rose" (5, 6). The lines divulge the request of the narrator; she pleads him to reach her because she has lost her strength to bear the agony of her lover's absence. In the poem, narrator requests him to save her from the clutches of grief. She suffers out of grief which is a consequence of her loneliness. She communicates him to reach her in no time by climbing the hills. She calls him as 'my bonny Irish lad' but the narrator of "Fuchsia Shock" sweetly calls her lover as 'dearest'. Though this marks the dissimilarity between them, they highlight and reveal the abundance love of the narrator though the words. Words are considered as one of the ways to express passionate love and them also different in accordance to the feeling of the writer.

The dissimilarity between the poem and the ballad is disclosed by the expression of love. "Red is the Rose" proposes the love as "... our love is fairer than any" (8) but "Fuchsia Shock" demands love: "Dearest, lavish your love" (24). "Red is the Rose" witnesses the vow of the lover and it is lucid: "And he swore he'd be my love forever" (12); it justifies and explicates their mutual love. One of the similarities between both the works of art is that they make explicit of the narrator's agony in her lover's absence. Nowhere, they confess the agony and sorrow the male character. In "Red is the Rose", her lover's sorrow and grief gains no place in the poem, instead it carves his vow.

"Fuchsia Shock" seems to describe more or less an unrequited love because she requests him to shower abundant love upon her. She also wishes her lover to be strengthened in love because her passion for him is bountiful. She believes that plentiful love can strengthen their bridge, love; therefore, she pleads him telling 'lavish your love'. This also signifies that he has not showered his love upon her lavishly. To a greater extent, it appears to be an unrequited love. Unrequited love can hurt the sufferer destructively. The narrator desires to strengthen their love and life with an abundance of love and she also trusts that the reinforced love can serve as a shield besides renewing their dreams.

Dearest, lavish your love
 in slender earthtone shades,
 in the colours of skin singing —
 to shield our renewed dreams,
 and to believe, once more, in absolutes.
 "Fuchsia Shock" (24-28)

The poem adds that she can reach the absolute bliss when she is treated and granted with the abundance of love. Her ardent desire and longing thirst for love is apparent: "and to believe, once more, in absolutes." "Fuchsia Shock" (28).

"Red is the Rose" has an awful ending whereas "Fuchsia Shock" ends with a requisition and suggestion. The ballad proves to be explicit more romantic love than the poem. Both the works of art proves to be passionate pieces of literature. They delineate the excruciating tone which is highlighted as the vivid similarity of them. The ballad has a dedicated closing; the words of the last stanza disclose the heart breaking emotion of the narrator. She expresses that her love for him is the greatest of all and the agony she bears is the extreme of all. Although she is hurt by the excruciating love, she is not desperate and she does not want to relinquish her love. She adds that the pain she endures is not out of her sister's parting and her mother's grief instead, it is love that her heart carries for her lover.

The narrator has considered her lad as her world and she has dedicated her life to him. Being the sole king of her soul dominates her and dazzles her incessantly. Therefore, her heart breaks off for him and she confesses:

'Tis not for the parting that my sister pains
 'Tis not for the grief of my mother,
 'Tis all for the love of my bonny Irish lad
 That my heart is breaking forever
 "Red is the Rose" (13-16)

The poem and the ballad do not reveal the identity of the lover; therefore, they are monologues of the narrators. The similarity between them is the narrators long for passionate and true love. They wish and desire to be united with their lover forever. They also desire to retain an undiminishing love so that they can live together forever. Therefore, the poem and the ballad delineate the yearning state of the narrators who are lovesick.

As Mia Rose has felt and expressed, 'love is a spiritual journey towards wholeness' both the works of art delineate and substantiate it. The similarities and dissimilarities of the ballad and the poem are bright by comparison. The comparison of "Red is the Rose" and "Fuchsia Shock" differentiate and point out the similarities as well as the peculiarity of the works. The ballad entertains its listeners and

readers through its fervent love but the poem melts the stubborn heart by its heart touching requisition of the narrator. However, both are treated under the same category of depicting the yearning state of love in separation.

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