

Page No. 126

Understanding The Poem**1. Comment on the subtlety with which the poet captures the general pattern of communication within a family.****Answer:**

In the poem 'For Elkana' the poet has depicted a scene of a common Indian home. On one April evening, walking on the porch, the wife explains a few issues which the husband is unconcerned about, as he thinks that any man in his neighbourhood would have an answer to them. The lady is keen to discuss the issues with no disturbance and asks for the attention of her husband. It is a typical normal way of how a conversation occurs between a husband and a wife, let it be on any topic under the sun. The husband thinks the talk is not relevant and ignores it. He thinks that the issues which his wife is discussing are too simple to spend his time on and in a funny way declares that his wife is correct in order to avoid any further arguments. It might be interesting for the reader to find that during an argument, the poet doesn't forget to explain about the wife's love for her husband.

2. Poetic effect is achieved in the poem through understatement and asides. Discuss this with examples.**Answer:**

The effect created by an aside or an understatement is the realistic visual imagery in the mind of the reader while reading the poem. While reading the poem, the reader's mood becomes similar to the mood of the poet while composing it. The setting overwhelms the reader through which their mind is captivated by the poet. Hence, the adjectives used not only beautify but also create a clear picture of the scene. The details about the surroundings, background and the characters that infuses the reader's mind, helps them understand the poet's feeling or about what he wants to convey through the poem. The details of the environment explained by the poet like "on a broken window pane" imparts an image of the characters and the house in which they live. The emotional impact is curated when the poet recalls "the man she loves who happened to be me" in between an argument, making it clear that even if numerous discussions or debates occur, the relationship between a wife and a husband is everlasting and cannot be questioned. The poet also explains about his son playing around and he describes his body language in depth. With "his small legs well apart" he demanded dinner from his mother. The growing up little boy, whose body language explains his attitude, "his crescent-moon-like chin uplifted, eyes hard and cold" shows his determination. These create cascading images in the reader's mind while reading the poem.

3. How is the idyllic juxtaposed with the pedestrian in the poem?**Answer:**

The poet is famous for bringing the extraordinary out of the ordinary. His poems are as per the ordinary issues and settings. The way in which he explains the normal issues are encouraged by the critics. He was the Indian poet who first neglected romance and wrote on common issues in his poetry in English. In other poems such as The Night of the Scorpion, the poet explains the emotions carried by the ordinary people. In this poem, Nissim has explained a common situation at home in which parents discuss their issues about the household. Using different figures of speech like undertones, meiosis, understatements and asides, he illustrates the normal discussion of issues which a married couple would go through or a parent would have for their children. Hence, through this poem, the poet has explained to the readers that an idyllic expression lies even in a pedestrian.

4. Explain the undertones in the statement:**'Wife and husband in unusual rapport****State one unspoken thought':****Answer:**

The statement explains the subtle relationship between a wife and a husband. It depicts both sides of a relationship. When both are in a heated argument, both of them think the same and read the thoughts of each other. Apart from being a wife and a husband they are parents to a seven year old boy. They possess the same feelings towards their child who they want to be disciplined. When the son demands dinner from his mother, she points a finger and asks him to stay quiet as there was an ongoing discussion which he was interrupting. The child who was impatient continued to nag. The parents gave a look to each other as they agreed that the discussion was interrupted, even if the father was least interested. Later he agreed that the little boy should be given dinner immediately as per his logic and wits. During this situation, both of them think of the same thing, it is the parenthood which binds them together other than their own relationship. They looked at each other to understand what the other person was thinking and realised that it was the same.

5. Comment on the capitalisation of all the words in the line:**'Children Must be Disciplined'.****Answer:**

The line is heavy and holds the authority as a parent. It was the thought which both parents were thinking when their little son interrupted during an ongoing discussion. Even if unspoken, the look both of them gave each other made it clear that they thought about the same thing. When a parent tells about how disciplined the child must be, the capitalisation of the words shows the stress laid on it. Even if the parents do not say it, they are authoritative which describes that the child must be well behaved and obedient.

6. What makes the urgency of the child's demand seem logical?**Answer:**

The seven year old child is impatient and young. When he listens to the discussion between the father and mother, his mother's voice reminds him of his hunger. He goes to her and demands for food. Though the mother asked him to wait for five minutes as there was an ongoing discussion, he demands for food by throwing his logic that he would not be hungry after this. The father finds the argument appealing and feels that the little boy who is "such a logician deserves his dinner straight away". The demand of the boy with such urgency and wittiness makes his mother laugh. The three of them were held together by this joy. The mother agrees to serve dinner and the three of them enter the house.