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The starry night poem analysis

This does not prevent me from being in a terrible need -- do I say the word -- for religion. Then he goes out at night to draw the stars -- Vincent van Gogh in a letter to his brother the city exists only where one black-haired tree slips like a woman soaked in the hot sky. The silent city of the night boils with eleven stars. Oh, starry night! That's how I want to die. The invisible old snake swallows the stars. This is how I want to die: to that impulsive beast of the night, absorbed by that great dragon, to break away from my life without knowledge, no belly, no cry. American poet Anne Sexton once said poetry must be a shock to the senses. It must be almost painful. Sexton presents this belief through writing style and a range of controversial topics, which undoubtedly shocked critics at times. Many of Sexton's poems reflect on her personal struggles with mental illness and her many encounters with feelings of suicide. Sexton became known as a doctrinal poet because of her autobiographical writing style. The main themes in her hair are depression and death. The desire to die, the dead truth we know, abortion, and a starry night are all examples of Sexton's writing depicting its central poetic themes. Through the use of vivid visual images, especially natural... Show more content... Sexton wrote her second book, All My Beautiful Ones, during a very difficult time in her life. During her years of apprenticeship as a poet, Sexton lost herself to her beloved great aunt and both her parents to premature mortality. Her own chronic illness, punctuated by suicide attempts, felt like a death threat that miraculously escaped (Middlebrook 3). Poems such as The Dead Truth Knows, A Starry Night, and Abortion Within This Book, are eloquent lyrical or eloquent prayers of these losses (Middlebrook 3). All my beautiful ones and her next book Live or Die contained some of Sexton's best and most prominent poems. Both books focused on Sexton's curiosity with living or dying as Sexton struggled constantly with her depression and hoped to commit suicide. In the 1970s, as Sexton became a very lonely drug and alcohol addict, she reached the point of her mental breakdown. After completing what she was planning to be her last book, Sexton sat in her car in her locked garage until she killed herself from carbon monoxide poisoning. Sexton's death came as no shock to many as she left behind books filled with warning signs with the majority of her poems written in a depressed mentality with the central theme of death. One critic said Sexton's hair saved her as long as saving was possible (Levertov... Show more content... In Stanza II, Sexton leads from the funeral to Cape to cultivate herself or deal with her grief. Describes the images you see on Like the sun shining from the sky the analogy is used to describe the sea that swings in like an iron gate. The scene, unlike Sexton's emotions, is very vivid and happy and the use of these images makes the reader understand that the world was still turning even through the life of the speaker had just stopped because of her loss (Johnson 3). The end of the second stanza concludes with another country where people die, which brings back the theme of the poem about death and returns the poem to a more melancholy tone that shows that it cannot escape death or its grief. In Stanza III, Sexton addresses a family member who is with her. Despite the wind falling like stones from the white-hearted water or the grief struck her, her loved ones touch her and she realizes that unlike the dead, she is not that that does not prevent me from having a terrible need of - do you say the word - religion. Then he goes out at night to draw the stars -- Vincent van Gogh in a letter to his brother the city exists only where one black-haired tree slips like a woman soaked in the hot sky. The silent city of the night boils with eleven stars. Oh, starry night! That's how I want to die. The invisible old snake swallows the stars. This is how I want to die: to that impulsive beast of the night, absorbed by that great dragon, to break away from my life without knowledge, no belly, no cry. This poem is inspired by Vincent van Gogh's famous starry night painting. He begins by quoting a letter written by Van Gogh, who says that, despite himself, he has a terrible deep need for religion, and that when he feels this need he goes out and paints the stars. I think there is something profound here about man's need for something eternal and sacred. Although Van Gogh did not want religion in his life, he needed the sacred. By creating art - by going out and painting the stars - Van Gogh was actually immortalizing the beauty of the world. He recognized the transcendent power of beauty although he might not necessarily feel the presence of the divine, the painter understood eternity, and he understood the sanctity of beauty. Van Gogh was a tortured and troubled artist just as he (Sexton) when you look at the night of the stars, painting, there is such a movement in brush strokes, such disturbances - almost violent - in the dense sky with its eleven stars whirling, boiling in the hot sky. I love Sexton's description of the painting, with a black-haired tree slipping like a woman soaked in a hot sky. This particular description really struck me. When you look at the painting you will see that the tree already looks as if it was made of hair. There's something dark and evil about that picture - it's even alive, and moving, as Sexton writes. I love the way the night boils. Description of the poet, because that's exactly how the painting looks to me. Refraining like this I want to die repeated twice in the poem. It is a kind of talisman, and it is central to the meaning of this poem in my opinion. I know I always bring everything back to Keats, but it reminds me of Audi to Nightingale in the nightingale, the poet listens to the beautiful voice of the bird (which represents the eternal beauty of poetry and art) and feels that this will be the perfect moment for death: now more than ever it seems to be rich to die, /to stop at midnight without pain, / While art pours your soul / in such ecstasy! I think Sexton expresses something similar here however, of course there is more violence in Sexton's desire to die, which I think reflects her suicidal nature and the fact that she will eventually be killed. Sexton does not simply want to stop at midnight with no pain; She'd be sucked by this great dragon, to divide/of my life with no science, /no belly, / no crying. Sexton wants to be part of the violent narrative. She wants to be part of the mythology - a world in which the old invisible snake swallows the stars. There are religious images here with the snake (satan), and the moon pushes children like a god, from his eye. I think that perhaps - in the same way that Van Gogh painted the stars because he had a terrible need for something eternal and sacred - Sexton wanted to die in a glorified way - by suicide, as a tortured poet - in order to join the hosts of immortal dead poets because their stories and work were eternal. Perhaps this poem expresses a feeling that Sexton's suicide poetry will be dramatic and violent and will be immortalized. My last thought in this poem is to do with the last words: no knowledge, / no belly, / no cry. This part of the poem seems very violent to me. Sexton is expressing her deep, dark desire on part with life, but she goes further... The unknowing part suggests to me that the poet says she wants to die not a martyr, or for any particular cause - not to raise the flag of patriotism, religion (or even the white flag of surrender). No, the poet does not want to die as a victim (perhaps this is part of her suicidal attraction). She also wrote that she wanted to die with no belly. This is an interesting image, which is clearly linked to the poet's femininity (the abdomen is the home of the uterus and the place in the body where life begins.) Is Sexton here saying she wants to die without a belly? Sexton had kids. In any case, here is the expression of the desire to die without producing more life in the process. Her belly - her ability to reproduce - wants to disappear. I think this is mostly about not wanting to be defined by her femininity, but rather by her abilities as a poet. Over there Also have the feeling here that she says she wants her creative production to stop (as it will be, in her death) - to be final and untouchable. Finally, the poet writes no cry. I believe that these last words are once again due to the idea of surrender. I think Sexton says she doesn't want to die a victim, with a cry of pain or defiance. She wants to go willingly, courageously, on her own terms. Reviewed by Emily Ardagh Ardagh

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