



Tikrit University

Collage of Education for Women

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The Analysis of “The Hind” Poem

The Full Text of “The Hind”

Thomas Wyatt

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind,
But as for me, *hélas*, I may no more.
The vain travail hath wearied me so sore,
I am of them that farthest cometh behind.
Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
Draw from the deer, but as she fleeth afore
Fainting I follow. I leave off therefore,
Sithens in a net I seek to hold the wind.
Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,
As well as I may spend his time in vain.
And graven with diamonds in letters plain
There is written, her fair neck round about:
Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,
And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.

Summary of “The Hind”

If anyone wants to go hunting, I know where you can find a deer. But, alas, I cannot keep hunting. The pointless pursuit has left me so exhausted that I'm all the way at the back of the group of hunters who are going after the deer. Even so, I cannot stop my tired mind from pursuing the deer, and so as she

runs away I follow her, almost fainting. I am giving up, since trying to catch her is like trying to catch the wind in a net. If anyone wants to hunt her, let me assure you, you will be wasting your time, just like me. There is written in diamonds in easy-to-read letters around her beautiful neck, “Don’t touch me, for I belong to Caesar, and I am wild, though I seem like I’m tame.”

Analysis of poem

The poem “Whoso List to Hunt” by Sir Thomas Wyatt, often referred to as “The Hind,” is a Petrarchan sonnet that delves into the themes of unattainable love and rejection. The speaker in the poem compares the pursuit of a hind, or female deer, to his pursuit of a lady’s affection. However, he realizes that just like the hind belongs to Caesar and is unattainable, the lady he desires is also out of his reach due to her existing commitment.

In the first section or octave of the poem, the speaker expresses his weariness and frustration in trying to win over the lady. He describes himself as falling behind and unable to capture her attention despite his efforts. The imagery of hunting and chasing after the hind symbolizes his futile attempts at gaining her favor.

The second part or sestet reveals the reason behind the impossibility of winning the lady’s heart. The reference to Caesar signifies that she belongs to someone powerful and unattainable, much like a monarch’s possession. The engraved message on her neck, “Noli me tangere,” meaning “Do not touch me,” further emphasizes her unavailability and loyalty to another.

Through this analysis, it becomes evident that “The Hind” explores themes of unrequited love, rejection, and the harsh realities of pursuing someone who is

already committed to another. The poem serves as a poignant reflection on the pain and hopelessness experienced by the speaker in his quest for love.

The opening line of the poem is a question which summons the reader to be excited. As the hunting game "was a popular pastime in the court of Henry VIII, this suggests a poem along the lines of Henry VIII's own most famous lyric, "Pastime With Good Company". However, the problem that the question in the first line raised is solved when the the speaker or the hunter gives up chasing.

Line 3 reveals that the efforts which have been exerted by the hunter are in vain: "vain travail". We can conclude that "the poem is an extended metaphor for the end of a relationship". The hunter is now at the last line of the hunting game even though he is still interested in the match. Wyatt uses an enjambment which means breaking a phrase over more than one line of verse, and caesura which means concluding a phrase within the first half of a line of verse, across lines six and seven to "highlight the discord represented by the end of the relationship as he subverts and challenges his own chosen structure."

In line 8, the poet states the concluding line of the octave to emphasize that the chase is useless by using the metaphor of the wind and net. The final sestet begins with line 9 reveals the poet's wish to surrender and informs the other hunters that the chase for them is in vain too.

Line 11 explains why the speaker's "hunt of this „hind“, and that of others who pursue her, is so pointless." The hind's neck is surrounded by a "bejeweled collar", referring in Latin that she shouldn't be touched: "Noli Me tangere". This Latin phrase "refers to a phrase spoken by Jesus to Mary Magdalene in the Bible". Also, another phrase in English tells us that she does not belong to any of the list of hunters but to the king or Caesar: "for Caesars

I am.” The historical chronicles stated that the Caesar or the king was Henry III and the hind was Anne Boleyn. They married but afterwards the queen was accused of adultery and sentenced to death. The identification between Caesar and King Henry III proves correct because: Caesar was, like Henry, a leader early in late teens, a handsome and strong young man and was significant in the political and aesthetic changes and developments of his realm. Both were literate, charismatic and influential. However, other less favorable parallels can be drawn. Both Caesar and Henry VIII incurred huge debt during their respective offices. There were many subjects who were held captive, sometimes executed, on charges of treason. Caesar faced questions regarding his sexuality and his unsuitable choices of women.

Form of poem

Wyatt writes this sonnet according to the Petrarchan pattern in the octave and some changes in the sestet according to his creation for the English sonnet. The rhyme scheme is abba abba cddc ee. The meter is iambic pentameter.