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TREATMENT OF LOVE IN ROBERT BROWNING'S "EVELYN HOPE"

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ABSTRACT

Robert Browning has presented love with its true spirit in Evelyn Hope. His love poems show a kind of passion which draws a man to a woman or woman to a man. For him, love is not only a bond between man and women but also unites God and man. He places his lovers in various situations and examines their psychological implications. Browning in his love poems does not describe the physical beauty of a woman but a little bit physical charm of a woman. It is clear in Evelyn Hope.

Keywords: Passion, Implications, Passion, Revelation Chastity

Robert Browning is one of the greatest love poets in English love poetry. He is not concerned with divine love or the love of God, country, family but the love between man and woman. His love poetry is intensely realistic in character. A man loves a woman not for her spiritual qualities but for her physical charm and passion- her curls, dented chin, little tricks of speech, all the causeless laughter's, the little private jokes and common memories that are the stuff of intimacy. That is the real thing, and that kind of love poetry, Browning is master. He intellectualizes the passion of love. The lovers of Browning provide a psychological analysis of their love, and it is clearly reflected in his poem like 'Evelyn Hope'. He does not emphasize the physical charms of his women, nor does he introduce like Keats 'light feet and creamy breasts' but he lays stress on the power of women to transform and transfigure man's life. This aspect of Browning's women is well brought out in Evelyn Hope. The research paper focuses on treatment of love in Evelyn Hope.

The poem 'Evelyn Hope' narrates the optimistic attitude of the speaker who is shocked at the sudden demise of his beloved. He is sitting beside her dead body for last one hour. He observes her personal belongings like her bed, book self. She plucked a Germanium flower in the glass which seems to dead. He doesn't find any major differences there except the shutters of window which are completely closed.

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!

Sit and watch by her side an hour

That is her book-self, this her bed;

She plucked that piece of geranium –flower,

Beginning to die too, in the glass;

He reveals that at the time of death she was sixteen years old. She might not have heard his name. She was too young to fall in love. She might have her dreams and aims. He loved her but he could not propose her

because she was too young. He was thrice of her age. She had little care from anyone, she had high expectations and many duties to perform.

Sixteen years old, when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,

The poet asks himself if it is too late to propose her. He praises her innocence and chastity. He says that her horoscope had good stars that is why she left the world too early. The poet was thrice of her age. That is why they could not love each other. He is aware that they are nothing to each other but they are mortals on the earth for a short time.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire and dew---

He says that God has created human beings for a noble cause. He created the world to love one another. He confesses that he still loves her. It does not matter that he fails to realize his love to her. He got delayed. He is still optimistic to find her in the next world. He will forget past life's happening till then and will learn something new.

No, indeed! For God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!

He is hopeful to find her in the next world. In their future life, when they will meet, he will find her body and soul pure and gay as earlier. He will discover her same amber hair and geranium like red lips at the time of her death.

But the time will come, ---at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?

When they will meet again in the next world, he will tell her about his past experiences and revelations. How many times, he left the world and took birth. During this wandering, he would have missed only one thing that is desire to meet Evelyn Hope. He always missed her.

I have live (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me:

He reveals that he loved her all the time. He loved her frank young smile, red young mouth and golden hair. Finally he put a leaf in Evelyn's hand so that they can recognize each other whenever they meet.

I loved you, Evelyn all the while.

My heart seemed full as it could hold?

There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,

And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.

So, hush, ---I will give you this leaf to keep:

Browning has attached mystic significance to his love poetry by talking of love and God as two interconnected realities. His love is not confined to the body or to this world alone. It is his faith that true lovers meet in the next world after their death. So love is not an end itself. It is a means towards attainment of heavenly bliss. Even when Browning is portraying cases of failure in love, he has a word of hope for them. He believes that true lovers meet in the next world. This faith is clearly visible in 'Evelyn Hope'.

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