

19th Century Poetry

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

A/ Break, Break, Break

Break = sadness

Thy = your

Would = wish

Utter = speak

Lad = boy

Bay =

Stately = huge = very big

Haven =

Vanished = disappeared

1. A general introduction of the poem:

This poem is an elegy. An elegy is a poem that laments the death of some one. Alfred Tennyson wrote the poem for the death of his friend. The name of his friend was: "Arthur Hallam" in fact, after the death of Hallam, most of the poems which Tennyson wrote was elegies.

2. The general meaning of the poem:

In this poem the speaker discloses his personal feelings concerning the death of Hallam. He says that he had deep feelings of sadness which cannot be explained. The others didn't feel his suffering. However, at the end of the poem he accepts the idea that his friend has died and that he will no more see him

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3. The structure of the poem:

The poem is internally divided into three parts:

Part One: is represented by stanza one which reflects the personal suffering of the speaker.

Part Two: covers both stanzas Two and Three and in this part there is a comparison between the sad life of the poet and the normal life of other people.

Part Three: is in stanza four which supplies a sort of conclusion to the ideas presented the poem.

4. The figures of speech in the poem:

There are many figures of speech in the poem; some of them are:

- A. **Repetition:** words, lines, and even stanzas are repeated in the poem.
- B. **Personification:** the poet speaks to the sea.
- C. **Assonance:** the repetition of the diphthong /ei/.
- D. **Alliteration:** the repetition of the consonant sound /b/
- E. **Imagery:** the image of the wave's break of the stones.
- F. **Symbolism:** the sea is used as a symbol of life.

5. The detailed meaning of the poem:

Stanza One: in this stanza the poet speaks to the sea to express his sadness. He says that words alone cannot convey his suffering.

Stanza Two: this stanza holds a comparison between the sad life of the poet and the normal life of both; the fisherman's Lad and the sailor boy.

Stanza Three: this stanza is divided into two parts:

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Part One: covers lines one and two in the stanza which refers to the movement of the big ships, while part two longs for Hamalla's voice and the touch of his hand.

Stanza Four: is a repetition of stanza one.

6. The themes of the poem :

The poem has many themes like:

- A. There are certain feelings which cannot be explained by words.
- B. Time passes; it does not bother about the others.
- C. True friendship is necessary in life.
- D. Personal suffering is private.

7. The **rhythm** of the poem is **SLOW**.

8. The **mood** of the poet is **SAD**.