

Tuesday 31st January 2023

Midwinter

Davies

The poem 'Midwinter' written by Graham Davies creates an initial, negative tone as it creates a feeling of entrapment. This could also mean the narrator is metaphorically trapped in "December's frost".

Initially, Davies presents Midwinter as negative as he uses the initial start of the poem to create a solemn mood. The phrase "No breezes move the branches, no birds sing" insinuates that the poem has a negative start, by using the repetition "no" which is dismissive, creating a negative effect. The use of animalistic imagery when using the nouns "no birds" creates a feeling that there is a lack of life, it could also suggest that winter is the season the "birds" migrate, therefore could encapsulate the passing of life. When Davies describes the "world" as "grey", it creates death like imagery, creating a threatening effect. The phrase "Frustrating for the spring" tells me by the use of personification that the narrator wants "spring" to come quickly. It also creates a melancholic tone as winter is desolate.

Towards the middle of the poem Davies presents winter as "bitter cold" and uses the phrase "insult" to emphasise the narrator's intense, ingrained dislike towards winter. The adjectives "bitter" and "insult" are part of a semantic field of winter, emphasising the narrator's perception of winter. It could however also represent the lasting, physical effects of winter, it makes your "fingers sting" the verb "sting" makes^{us} readers understand and relate to the physical effects of winter. The repetition at the end of the stanza emphasises the narrator's "frustrating for the spring". The verb "frustrating" tells us that the narrator still has hope for spring. The repetition of "No" when Davies uses the phrase "No life, no movement" reinforces that everything is present and still, nothing has changed in any form, therefore creates a melancholy tone.

Towards the end of the poem Davies presents Midwinter as hopeful as he uses the phrase "increase and decay". The verb "increase" creates an intense feeling as the narrator is "trusting" and hopeful that Spring will arrive. The verb "decay" uses language of passing of time, which links to the "trusting for the spring" - winter is decaying, therefore the narrator is hopeful. Then, the use of the phrase "hope are frozen" could suggest that "hope" could be viewed as "frozen" at this immediate time. The cyclical structure of "No breezes" represents the seasons and ends on a hopeful note.

In the poem, there are 5 equal stanzas, each 3 lines each representing his dislike for winter. However, the sixth stanza has 4 lines, a line longer than the other 5 stanzas. This could show the hope he has for spring as he ends on a final note of "trusting" for the arrival of spring. The poet uses an ABAB rhyme scheme which is regular for the first 5 stanzas, however the last stanza is different. It shows that winter is presented as a never ending cycle, however the last stanza shows there is some sort of hope.

Overall, the poet may want us to think about the never ending, long days of winter, in comparison to Spring. The narrator's immense dislike for winter creates a cynical, despairing tone. Whereas, Spring creates a hopeful, lighthearted tone.