



PERCY BYSSHE
SHELLEY'S

To A
SKYLARK

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

- ❖ Born on 4th August 1792 in Field Place, United Kingdom.
- ❖ Poet, Dramatist, Essayist and Novelist
- ❖ One of the major English Romantic Poets.
- ❖ Regarded as the finest lyric poet in the English language.
- ❖ Became an idol for the next three or four generations.
- ❖ Best known for classic poems such as Ozymandias, To a Skylark, Ode to West Wind etc.
- ❖ He didn't achieve fame during his lifetime. His achievements in poetry were recognized after death.



INTRODUCTION

Shelley hails the Skylark which is a bird of music and joy. Its music is sweet because it has never experienced sadness and grief. Whereas, man's life is full of sorrows and miseries. The Skylark inspires the poet to feel rapturous joy that is free from pain. Shelley has personified Skylark as a spirit, as a celestial being. Skylark's song is symbol of happiness and peace. Shelley desires to have even half of the Skylark's charm so that he can sing joyfully and charm the world.



SUMMARY



*Hail to thee, blithe
Spirit!
Bird thou never
wert,
That from Heaven,
or near it,*

This poem expresses Shelly's joy on hearing the song of Skylark. Skylark's song arouses certain thoughts in his mind. The Skylark here stands for poetic imagination. It is poetic spirit in the form of bird.

Skylark is not a bird. It is a spirit of delight. It flies high in the sky and cannot be seen. Only the happy songs of Skylark can be heard. The heart of Skylark is filled with joy and this joy flows in its happy songs. It sings while flying and flies while singing. Like a morning star, Skylark is not seen but its presence is felt by its sweet music. It is not known what Skylark is. Its music is better than the rain drops. Poet compares Skylark to a love-sick girl who consoles her love-sick heart by music. Skylark is like a glow-worm Which is not seen but its light can be seen.



In the same way, Skylark is not seen but its music is heard. It is also compared with the rose that makes wind heavy with its sweet smell. The songs of Skylark are sweeter than the songs of marriage and victory. The sweet songs of Skylark are better than the songs of human beings. Shelley

*Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:*



Wants to know which thoughts and objects inspire Skylark to sing such sweet music. He feels that the reason for Skylark's sweet songs is its ignorance of death and pain. It is free from worldly worries. It loves but its love is not like human love. Skylark is free from experience of over-satisfaction. Human beings are always afraid of death. Due to this fear, they never experience pure joy like Skylark.

*Thou lovest: but ne'er knew love's
sad satiety.*



Skylark is careless about death. That's why, the song of Skylark is pure and full of joy. Tears and smiles lie close together in man's life. Either he is worried about his future or anxious about his past. This is not the case with Skylark.

There is always some sadness hidden in man's happiness. That's why he can never experience the pure joy and happiness which Skylark enjoys. The sweetest songs of man have a touch of sadness. According to Shelley, the song of Skylark

is better than the knowledge found in books. Shelly wants to become a great poet. He knows he cannot have same joy and happiness that is enjoyed by Skylark. But if he is half as happy as Skylark , he can become a great poet. Then he would be able to create sweet songs that would be heard by the whole world. At present, he is charmed by the sweet song of Skylark. Then the whole world would be charmed by his sweet songs.

*Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness*



To a Skylark



SYMMETRIES

Shelley compares Skylark's music with moon light, sound made by rain drops, a love-sick lady's lament, glow-worm, fragrance of rose etc. The Skylark is compared to a star in daylight, morning star at dawn and the moon

behind the cloud. The sky is flooded with the moon light on a cloudless night. In the same way, when Skylark sings the whole atmosphere overflows with its song. Only the song of love-sick lady in the tower is heard by the people outside. In the same way, the sweet song of invisible Skylark is enjoyed by the people. Just as the glow worm is not seen but its light is seen by the people. Similarly, the skylark is not seen but its song is heard. The smell of the rose spreads everywhere but nobody sees the rose. Similarly, no one can see the Skylark but its song is heard by everyone.

THEME

INSPIRATION

The Skylark is metaphor that represents pure poetic expression and pure inspiration. It is model of perfection. Shelley feels that it stands for poetic imagination. He looks up to Skylark for inspiration. Shelley is certain that Skylark belongs to an ideal world. It is free from pain and fear of death. Human beings can never achieve the joy of Skylark. Shelly feels if he is half as happy as Skylark, he can become a great poet.



To A Skylark

By : Percy Bysshe Shelley

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

Eloquence



THE END