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ENG 207

Sonnet 55:

Not marble nor the gilded monuments

Of princes shall outlive this pow'rful rhyme,

But you shall shine more bright in these contents

Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.

When wasteful war shall statues overturn,

And broils root out the work of masonry,

Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn

The living record of your memory.

'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity

Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room

Even in the eyes of all posterity

That wear this world out to the ending doom.

So, till the Judgement that your self arise,

You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

**Gloss 1: Sluttish**

The word sluttish is an adjective derived from the noun slut. Sluttish is defined by the Oxford English dictionary by giving two distinctive definitions. The first one is careless, dirty or slovenly that refers to both people and objects. The second meaning is whorish, morally loose or lewd. Of these two definitions the most commonly used and understood by people in the current generation is the second one. When one hears of the word sluttish, they get the impression of a woman who has many sexual partners and untidy.

The word sluttish is sparingly used with objects as suggested in the first definition. When used with objects it feels as if the object has been personified, since sluttish is considered a human train. When used with objects, the word gives them undesirable characteristics. It makes the object become something that no one should wish to associate with.

In this Sonnet, time has been said to be sluttish. Here, the Shakespeare uses the first definition of slutty, which is not so well famous in the modern society. The term sluttish is used to show how careless time is when it comes to preserving beauty. The use of the adjective sluttish gives time the destructive characteristics, painting the image of its force and unshakable desire to destroy what is worth preserving.

When used to describe an object, the word sluttish can also mean dirty and untidy. For instance, in old English, a dirty house could be referred to as slutty. A person with unkempt hair could be said to have slutty hair. Sluttish basically shows how undesirable a situation, a person, an object or even an event is based on its traits. It is also used exchanging with the word immoral, especially when refereeing to women who have many sexual partners.

All in all, the meaning of the word sluttish as used in this sonnet is not well known by many in the current society. In itself, the word sluttish sounds and feels like a trait that is only associable to people. On the contrary, the word sluttish can also be used with objects to describe their nature.

(357 words)

**Gloss 2: Memory**

The word memory dates back to the fourteenth century, with an origin from the Old French and Latin. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, memory is the faculty through which information is stored and retrieved for remembrance by the brain. The brain is considered the store in which people can store information and life experiences to either use in future, or pass to other generations. It is through memory that people learn. The people who have a good ability to remember things are said to have a good memory, while the ones who hardly remember an occurrence in their life are said to have poor memory.

Memory is also used to refer to things that triggers remembrance of something that happened in the past. For instance, a person may take photos while on a tour as reminders of the experiences they had in the future. These pictures act as memory aids in future, and by looking and them and trying to remember, one can recreate the event in their mind.

The term memory can also be used to refer to one’s reputation, especially after their death, or departure. For instance, a monument was usually raised as a constant reminder of the achievements that a certain person or event has had on the community. Through this, the reputation of the person is preserved, and thus, it is considered a memory of the person.

Currently, since the emergence of computer technology, the word memory has acquired a new definition, which refers to the storage device for information. When talking about memory in computing, one refers to the capacity of the computer to store information. This type of memory is usually designated using different sizes such as gigabytes, terabytes and megabytes among others. This is currently the most popular definition of memory.

In sonnet, Shakespeare had the memory of reputation in mind when he said “The living record of your memory” (Sonnet 55, Line 8). This is because, he wishes to preserved the reputation of the beauty, making her acquire eternal life.

(340 words)

**Gloss 3: Rhyme**

The term rhyme is has originates from the ancient Greek, with its current spelling dating back to the seventeenth century. Rhyme is both a verb and a noun. When used as a noun, the term rhyme refers to the trait of poems to possess similar sounds at the ends of lines. This sounds are usually created to enhance the musicality of the poem as a piece of art. The sounds could either be vowel sounds or consonant sounds. From this type of rhyme, we have the rhyme scheme which is a pattern that shows the repetitive sounds used at the end of lines of a poem

Also, the noun rhyme can be used to refer to a small part of a poem taken from a large poem. A rhyme is characterized by its ease of memorability, making it easy to learn and recite from time to time. For instance, there are the nursery rhymes, which are short poems of two to five sentences sang by children to familiarize themselves with pronunciations of certain sounds.

When used as a verb, the term rhyme refers to the act of possessing an end sound that corresponds to another. For instance, in the sentence, “sample rhymes with purple”, the word rhyme is used as a verb. The verb can also be used to refer to the act of saying words that share the end sounds. When a person says such words, which rhyme, they are said to be rhyming.

Considering Shakespeare’s use of the word rhyme in his sonnet 55, he was referring to the second definition of rhyme as a noun. This definition is not popular with the present readers. When one hears of a rhyme, the think of words that end with same sounds. However, Shakespeare uses the word rhyme in reference to the short state of his poems, only fourteen lines.

(313 words)

**Paraphrase**

Neither precious stone nor gold coated memorials

Of leaders shall live longer than this poem,

You will shine brighter in these lines

Than dirty gravestone, that has been withered over the years

When statues will be overturned by fighting,

And the mason’s handiwork destroyed by battles,

Neither the source of the war nor the aftermath shall destroy

This indestructible poem about you.

Against demise and every unforeseen destructor of human life,

You will keen on moving; there will be always a place for your praise

Even within the vision of all generations of the future

That live to see the end of humanity.

Therefore, until you resurrect during the judgment day,

You are alive through this poem, and you always live in the eyes of the lovers.

**Syncope**

This refers to the omission of syllables from the middle of a word in poetry. In pow’rful, the letter *e* has been omitted hence the syllable *wer*. This is used to create the impression of an informal speech. Informal contraction is also used in the case of ‘Gainst where the first syllable *A* is omitted. These omissions are done to make the poem easily readable as spoken speech.

**Analysis**

Not marble nor the gilded monuments

**Imagery**

Marbles and gilded monuments are images used to show how immortality was created for the royals family members. The poet uses them here to show their inferiority, compared to the power of his poem to preserve memories.

Of princes shall outlive this pow'rful rhyme,

But you shall shine more bright in these contents

Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.

When wasteful war shall statues overturn,

And broils root out the work of masonry,

**Catachresis**

This is seen in your self where the word *yourself* has been separated into two words. This is done to create emphasis of the *self*.

Sluttish is an image used to describe time. Through this imagery, time has been personified.

Sluttish means careless, dirty, slovenly, whorish, morally loose or lewd. It is usually used to describe a woman with multiple sexual partners and loose morals.

Giving time this trait makes it an enemy which the poet wants to fight.

Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn

The living record of your memory.

'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity

Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room

Even in the eyes of all posterity

That wear this world out to the ending doom.

So, till the Judgement that your self arise,

You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

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