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**"Daddy" by Sylvia Plath**

The poem “Daddy” was written on 12th Oct 1962 right after one month of Plath separation from her husband. She moved to a flat in London with her two kids. She was dead after four months so writing this poem but this turbulent period is market with most of her best poems. The poem is a violent and discordant attack on her dead father. The poem has a theme of "evil-father," which is evident in her other poems as well. The poem insists that she need to kill her dad but he died before that, this shows her hatred and anger towards her dad which continues throughout the poem. Speaker creates a figurative image of dad and employs different metaphors to describe the relationship with dad. He is called as a black shoe speaker has to live in, a statute that stretches across the US, God, Nazi, and a vampire. The whole poem is like revenge from her father and shows the struggle of the speaker to declare evil nature of her father. Daddy is an excellent example of confessional poetry by Sylvia Plath which gives a painful idea of a female victim of slavery of her father, and other controversial details from her personal life.

“Daddy” is designated as one of the most controversial poems written in modern times. The poem is dark, surreal and makes use of painful allegory and metaphor to bring about the idea of a lady victim releasing herself from her father. She herself says, "Here is a poem that is spoken by a girl with an Electra complex. Her father died while she thought he was God. Her case is complicated by the fact that her father was also a Nazi and her mother very possibly Jewish. In the daughter the two strains marry and paralyze each other—she has to act out the awful little allegory once over before she is free of it." (*Eileen M. Aird: On “Daddy” | Modern American Poetry*)

Confessional poetry is an example of poetry which speaks and describes the personal emotional experiences of the poet (portablearcie). The subject matters that are being discussed in this type of poetry has never been discussed in American poetry. It is characterized by the personal experiences of the poet, whether good or bad. The confessional poet not only pen down their emotions but their treatment to their poetic self is shocking for some readers. The Boston-bred poet Sylvia Plath is declared as one of the American's Confessional poet because her work is filled with personal and private experiences and her personal viewpoints of death, trauma, depression, and relationships. This poem, "Daddy," she expresses not only one idea but all of these ideas.

“Daddy’, is an excellent example of confessionary poetry as it serves as an excellent example of the poet's preference towards the heavy subject matter. Confessionary poetry is an example of an introspective subject matter. A new style of poetry emerged in the 1950s and 1960s and in this era pots disclosed very sensitive information about themselves. This genre is usually referred to as confessional poetry. Sylvia Plath is the most well-known confessional poet as it shares the poet’s experiences with her daddy. The poem shares somewhat of mixed emotions towards her dad, who is the key figure in this poem. Plath's use of Holocaust imagery is another example of a controversial yet intriguing element. Throughout the poem, she portrays her father as Nazi by referencing his “neat mustache,” “Aryan eye” and “German tongue.” She describes herself as a Jew, and even goes as far as depicting “an engine” that takes her off “to Dachau, Auschwitz, or Belsen” (Foundation). In this way, she employs strong imagery in her poem to create a relationship of "oppressor-oppressed," between Sylvia and her daddy.

Another feature of the poem which makes Daddy a confessional poem is the childlike references such as nursery rhyme qualities in the poem that discloses Plath’s trouble and affection to her father’s memory. The first two lines indicate that "You do not do, you do not do/Any more, black shoe In which I have lived like a foot." This indicates childlike babbling and the reference of “black shoe” has a connection with the childhood poem of old women who lived in a black shoe. Besides, ‘Daddy’ is also dispersed in other childish pieces in different lines such as “achoo” and “gobbleygoo” are instances. This also indicates that her recollections with her daddy happened as a child. On a deep level, the fact of disturbance is that the childish qualities are accompanied by the thoughtful subject matter, Nazis.

“Daddy” is made a more confessional poem by the fact that it gives a deeper insight into Plath's own psyche, in spite of how disturbing, unflattering and upsetting it is. She discloses the huge impact that her father’s nonappearance is on her which makes her making attempts to suicide, “At twenty I tried to die And get back, back, back to you." In addition, added personal detail about Plath disclosed is that she replaced her daddy with her spouse, Ted Hughes. She defines him like this, "a man in black with a Meinkampf look," which is the way of comparing him to another image of her father and at another point in the poem "the vampire who said he was you."

One more evidence of “Daddy” being a confessional poem is that Plath is very confident in revealing and sharing the utmost sensitive phases of her life that contribute to making her poem very influential. The poem describes the dependence of the child on her dad, something which the speaker of the poem opens and closes with. The poem is full of examples where the poet is reflecting the naked sense of emotions which makes Daddy one of the most famous confessional poem. Plath uses the types of emotions and sensations in her poem which seek to bring about emotional revelation and catharsis through the poetic explanation. Presumably, the poet seeks this end through the poem. The overall purpose of the poem is filled with confessional poetry aspects. At its every root it has a complex relationship between a daughter and her father. The poet herself is not clear about the kind of relationship, and the speaker lies in between this ambiguity. To seek this relationship, the poet explores herself, which makes her poem another example of confessional poetry which the poet uses to explore more unappealing aspects of her sense of being. This revelation and exploration are done openly in this poem, and this is where the confessional poetry lies and Plath's Daddy also exist in.

In a nutshell, daddy is a confessional poem which leaves the reader unmoved. It is not reasonable to say that poems by Sylvia Plath do not influence the reader immensely. Daddy is evidence of Plath's profound talent and makes her an avid confessional poet of her time. She is designated to be the one who promoted confessional poetry in America with some other poets. Despite her traumas and personal history, she is able to craft a poem which encompasses both her historical and personal history in an emotional yet impressive manner in "Daddy."

**Works Cited**

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