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The Nature and Identity in Rich's Poem

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Introduction

The trees by Adrienne Rich is a poem which is beautifully written in order to put forward a feminist thought in the minds of the reader. Adrienne Rich herself a feminist and we can easily understand the main theme of the poem by knowing the ideals Rich hold in her life. Adrienne Rich is a strong feminist and she wants to enlighten people by throwing light on feminist ideals with the help of her poems. The poem "The trees" basically talks about some trees which are grown inside green houses or grown inside a confined area try to come out by breaking shackles and move out to the place where they actually belong. The poet metaphorically elucidates by comparing trees with women. The poet symbolically says that women should not confine themselves within four walls of the house and come out and express themselves. They have to find a way to move to the place they actually belong. They shouldn't belittle themselves and should untangle their roots and move forward in their lives. This poem is basically a symbolic poem that focuses on trees that are present indoors but seeking to escape to forest where they will be getting lots of freedom. There is no point staying in heaven without any freedom. We can't live the life to the fullest even if we stay in a spectacular place without freedom. Rich wanted to emphasize on this concept through this poem. The trees here mainly represent womanhood. The poem symbolically explicates that women shouldn't be in the dark for too long and should come out knowing what they are capable of to where they belong. The trees mentioned in the poem is just an extended metaphor where the trees are compared with female, especially females who are in need of healing or having been healed, are now ready for their true purpose renewing the empty forest. This poem was written in 1963 and published in her book *Necessities of Life*. This poem gave a good image to Adrienne Rich as a poet as well as a cultural figure head. We can see the eco-feministic character of the poet in most lines in this poem. Some of the lines which tells the particular character of the poet can be seen below. The trees inside are moving out into the forest, the forest that was empty all these days where no bird could sit no insect hide no sun bury its feet in shadow. (1-5). Here the trees symbolically represent womanhood. The trees inside refers to the woman who are confined inside a closed place are coming out. The poet says that the trees are moving into the forest where the forest represents freedom. In the second line "the forest that was empty all these days" just tell us that this line is used to symbolize women are being left in the dark for too long not knowing their true identities and where they belong. All night the roots work to disengage themselves from the crack in the veranda floor. (8-10). In these lines the author is trying to compare the roots of the trees with women who try to disengage themselves from the place where they actually are stand still and move to a place where they actually belong. These lines truly depict the strong forceful effect women take in order to disengage themselves from a place which is a like a big block of obstruction for their growth. Long-cramped boughs shuffling under the roof like newly discharged patients half-dazed, moving to the clinic doors (13-16). In these lines, the poet beautifully compares how a discharged patient will move after getting treated to that of women who go out after knowing what they are capable of. It meant that trees which are compared to women in this context were sick or unhappy and in need of medical help. After getting healed, the poet says that they are moving half dazed to the clinic doors. This tells us that the women are now treated for their mental blocks which didn't allow coming out and express themselves is finally fixed. Now women are free to move and have all the liberty in their lives.

The night is fresh, the whole moon shines
in a sky still open

the smell of leaves and lichen

still reaches like a voice into the rooms. (21-24)

These lines tells that after the mass exodus of trees, Rich can still smell the remains of trees just like a voice that turns into whispers in her own head. These whispers here depict the last messages of her old life, soon to be renewed.

"The moon is broken like a mirror, / its pieces flash now in the crown / of the tallest oak" (30-32). In these lines, the poem becomes slightly cinematic where the former self of a woman is broken into pieces and the fragmented image lighting up the tallest tree, an oak, the strongest, most durable of trees.

We can thus view an eco-feministic side of Adrienne Rich in this poem where the author beautifully explicates her feminist ideals with the help of a poem. The tone with which this poem was written basically tells that this poem was written in order to give an impetus to women to come out and express themselves. Rich doesn't want women to remain in a confined space. The poet tries to influence women in a positive way so that they should come from darkness to light. The poet wants to lead all the women who are curtailed in a narrow sphere from an obscured place to a place full of illumination. Thus we can say that the Adrienne Rich is a very good example of eco-feminist poet.

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