

Degree 1 mb (50) marks

English

She was a Phantom of Delight by William Wordsworth

In the poem, *She was a Phantom of Delight* Wordsworth describes his wife and his reaction to her. He chooses to depict three points in their developing relationship: when they first met; as they began to know each other better; and now that they are married. When he saw her for the first time the poet felt that Mary Hutchinson was a spirit of happiness. She was lovely and he felt that she had been sent to make him proud of her even for a short time. Her eyes were as beautiful as the star in the evening and her hair also was as dark as the evening. In order to create her, nature might have collected all the beautiful things from the spring seasons and the cheerful morning. Her shape was like that of a graceful dancer and attractive mental picture would always be in the thoughts of the poet and sometimes he would be surprised and frightened. When the poet was doing something and going somewhere her thought would disturb him. The poet was in close contact with her and he realised that she was still a spirit, he also felt her womanly qualities. She would move here and there in his home lightly and freely doing

household work. Her freedom showed that she was still virgin. The poet could see sweet remembrances and sweet promises on her face. She was not excessively bright and good for many of the things which one had to face in everyday life. She was an ordinary woman. She would inspire the poet. She had all the following human qualities to a moderate degree transient sorrows, simple, vile, praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.

In this poem, the poet describes her wife first as an ideally beautiful woman, then a pleasant companion and a house wife and finally an intellectual and a moral being who is capable of guiding him. Beginning with a distant view that offers an illusion, he closes up to a more realistic and spiritual view of his wife. In the first stanza, he described his wife as a phantom, which is an illusion, her eyes are compared to the evening stars which are impossible to obtain. Similarly, her hair is also described as dark as the dusk. It highlights her mysterious quality. Then the poet idealizes her. In order to create her beauty, the creator collected all things "From many times and the cheerful dawn". Like a phantom she haunts, startles and waylays the poet.

After their marriage, the poet gets a near view of her. He finds her to be a good housewife. She works hard and satisfies her husband. She

is not an extraordinary person. She possesses all the human qualities, but not to an extreme degree. Finally, she proves herself to be a perfect woman. She is said to be a machine because the several aspects of her personality.

There are three stanzas in this poem. Each stanza has ten lines and its rhyming scheme is aa bb cc dd ee. The poet has used similes and metaphors to describe her more clearly. “*A phantom of delight*”, “*a lovely apparition*”, *the machine*, and a *traveller* between life and death are examples of metaphor and her eyes are stars of twilight fair, like twilights too, her dusky hair are the examples of simile.

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