

Love by George Herbert

George Herbert is one of the most important members of **Metaphysical School of Poetry**. He is known as a religious poet who gives much importance on the beauty of soul rather than the beauty of body.

Love 3 is a part of a sequence of three poems, which meditate on the nature of love. *Love 1*, and *Love 2* focus on earthly love and how it tends to attract more attention than holy love. Particularly *Love 1* looks into the relationship between mortal and immortal love and *Love 2* explores the connection between divine love and human lust. However, *Love 3* concentrate on sacred love by personifying love in a dialogue between worshipper and God. Here God is seen as an inviting lover that explains the worthlessness of love.

The poem has three stanzas with six lines each, arranged in longer and shorter lines. It has an ABABCC rhyme scheme with a religious tone and a guilty mood. Furthermore, love, religion and the relationship between these two are central themes in *Love 3*.

The first stanza of the poem describes how the lyrical voice called by love. This lyrical voice describes how she/he is welcomed by love “love bade me welcome” love is being personified, as it can speak and interact with the lyrical voice in a human way, and works at the same time, as a metaphor of God. Nevertheless, the lyrical voice feels guilty and wants to refuse love’s invitation. Love observes the lyrical voice’s guilt and draws in her “but quick eyed love” observing me grow slack / from my first entrance in / drew nearer to me”. Instead of blaming and criticizing the lyrical voice, love asks him/ her whether he/ she needs something. The lyrical voice has a guilty and nervous tone, as he/she feels ashamed of his or her sins. The action narrated through the poem seems to have already taken place due to the tense of the verbs. However, the narration is powerful and vivid, as the poem is structured in a dialogue form, which is furthered in the following two stanzas.

The second stanza presents a debate. The lyrical voice tells love that he /she lacks worth to be in front of him. “a guest I answered, worthy to be here”. Love replies that he/she should be there “love said, you shall be he”. The lyrical voice will insist on his/her forgetfulness and his/her unworthiness. Love will reassure the lyrical voice and tell him her once again that she/he is worthy of his presence. In this stanza,

the conversation between the lyrical voice and love is more dynamic as they debate on whether the lyrical voice is worthy of love's presence. The tone shifts, it is milder and gentler, as the lyrical voice accepts love's words. God in the form of Love, is presented as a forgiving, as he tells the lyrical voice: "Who made the eyes but I?". the dialogue form of stanza, and of the entire poem has a regular pace constructed by this question and answer form. This interaction between the lyrical voice and love, God has ceremonial feel that is brought down to earth by the lexical simplicity in the words used.

The third stanza presents the last part of the end of the dialogue between love and lyrical voice. The lyrical voice feels ashamed because he/she have marred his/ her eyes "Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame /go where it doth deserve". Once again, the lyrical voice feels guilty, sinful and not worthy of love's presence and words. Love will insist that "he bore the blame". The lyrical voice emphasises his duty of love, and God and says that he/she will serve. Finally, love says that the lyrical voice must taste his meat and the lyrical voice finishes the stanza by saying that he/ she did so I did sit and eat. Notice how the tone changes and, in these last lines, the lyrical voice overcomes his/her feeling of guilt and accepts the gentle word of love. In *Love 3*, The holy love, the love of God, compensates for human weakness.

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