

Lucas Morse

11/2/20

Garden School, Jackson Heights

Robert Burns Society Literary Scholar Award Essay

The themes of Robert Burns's "Ae Fond Kiss" are grief caused by great endearment. Throughout this unfeigned poem, Robert describes his endearment to a woman to whom he is saying goodbye to forever. He is overwhelmed by his love for this woman and is suffering greatly because of how much he is endeared to her. He believes that she is the most beautiful woman in the world and that anyone who even took a cursory glance at her would fall as deep into love as he has. This theme of endearment continues throughout the whole poem and despite love usually being a good thing these feelings are what leads Robert to his poignancy.

Robert states in the second stanza of "Ae Fond Kiss" that this woman is the only woman that he will ever be able to love and that his love for her will never fade. "Love but her, and love forever". Robert knows that he might not ever be able to love again or ever forget about the love he had for this woman. He is grieving over this and recognizes that if they never met he wouldn't feel as bad as he does now. "Never met-or never parted, We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

As stated here, Robert recognizes that despite how much he loved this woman, and how much she made him happy, that if they never met he would be in a better place than he is now. This is the worst stage of grief, feeling desolation for someone you endeared greatly.

Another example of endearment and grief in “Ae Fond Kiss” is in the last stanza of the poem. In this last stanza, Robert states his goodbye to this woman, wishing her the best in her future and telling her he enjoyed all of her love, he then continues by saying he is still in a state of grief and despair, truly a heartbreaking ending, Robert wishes the best for the woman of his dreams knowing he will never see her again and knowing that he will always be in despair because of her. “Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!

Thine be ilka joy and treasure,  
Peace, Enjoyment, Love and Pleasure!  
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!  
Ae fareweeli alas, for ever!  
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,  
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee”.

This shows the true extent of his love, he cares more for her happiness than his because she means so much to him.

The connection of Endearment and grief are just one of the numerous themes of “Ae Fond Kiss” by Robert Burns. It is well displayed throughout the poem and truly shows how sad this poem is. This woman was irreplaceable to Robert, and if what he wrote was true, he probably felt this way his whole life. “Ae Fond Kiss” shows how well emotion can be conveyed through poetry. An excellent author such as Robert Burns can make you feel everything he once felt.