Pathetic Plight of a Woman as Revealed in Sylvia Plath’s Poetry

Sylvia Plath is one of the most powerful American poets of the post World War II period. Viewed as a therapeutic response to her divided personae as an artist, daughter, mother and wife, her poetry reveals the psychological torment associated with feelings of alienation, inadequacy and rejection. Further, the neglect of women’s rights and the inequality of opportunities for male and female grew in her irritated self. Betrayal by her loved husband exaggerated her psychological disorders. Her poetry also reveals the frustration and tension which a woman faces because of the patriarchal structure and the discrepancy between the way she wants to behave and the way she is made to behave. She thought that nobody being able to satisfy her needs and considers death as one and only solution.

PAPER:
Sylvia Plath’s poetry is a presentation of emotion, excessive self-absorption, inaccessible personal allusions, and nihilistic obsession with death. Viewed as a therapeutic response to her divided personae as an artist, daughter, mother and wife, her poetry reveals the psychological torment associated with feelings of alienation, inadequacy and rejection. Her first volume of poetry, *The Colossus and Other Poems*, displays an intervening obsession with estrangement, motherhood and destruction in contemporary society. Much of her anger is directed against her father, Otto Plath, whom she cites both as a muse and target of scorn. She conveys her personal allusions and references to Nazis and the Holocaust to offer a deeper and closer understanding of her psyche.

In a highly pathetic tone, Sylvia says in *The Colossus*: O father, all by yourself You are pithy and historical as the Roman Forum. Your fluted bones and acanthine hair are littered. In their old anarchy to the horizon-line. (“The Colossus” 17-21)

In the poem *Daddy* the speaker compares her father and her husband to vampires saying how they betrayed her and drank her blood-sucking her dry of life. She tells her father to give up and be done, to ‘lie back’ (75) and further in line 80, she says ‘Daddy, daddy you bastard’.

The *Vampire who said he was you* And drank my blood for a year Seven years, if you want to know. (“Daddy” 72-74)

Plath’s poems *Daddy*, *The Snowman on the Moor*, and *Edge*, bring to light her frustration with gender-role at the time by exposing her relationships with men and her treatment. Thomas McClanahan, a professor at the Idaho State University Department of Humanities, characterises Plath’s poetry as aggressive, saying: Plath is a brutal poet — she taps a source of power that renovates her poetic voice into a raving avenger of womanhood and innocence. *Daddy* acts as partial story for *Daddy*.

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**KEYWORDS**
Ambivalence, Frustration and Pathetic Plight.
The shriek in the bath,
The lioness,
Doll he guards like a heart—
From the small jeweled
I shall unloose—
How they grip us through thin and thick,
You will be aware of an absence, presently,
Growing beside you, like a tree,
And a sky like a pig’s backside, an utter lack of attention.
And we, too, had a relationship—
In the museum:
Tight wires between us,
Pegs too deep to uproot, and a mind like a ring
The constriction killing me also. (“The Rabbit Catcher” 24-30)
Asking nothing of life. (“Paralytic” 37-40)
Pegs too deep to uproot, and a mind like a ring
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**REFERENCES**