

Theme of the poem Eve of St. Agnes

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Keats is the most influential among the romantic poets. Like the other romantic poets, he took poetry as a platform to express personal feelings and emotions. He had firm faith in the belief that poet should have the opportunity to share his feelings with the masses. But unlike Wordsworth he used well-chiselled words, symbols and images borrowed from the mythologies to give his poems a new charm and grandeur which is seldom noticed in other romantic poets. It is often said that the poetry of Keats is like a car decorated with flower. It runs smoothly otherwise the decoration will be removed. The full flowering of Keats' poetic art is reflected in his short poems. Although taking inspiration from Milton he tried his poem Hyperion epic grandeur but failed miserably saying that 'life to him will be death to me', English must be kept up. Actually Milton's Latinized diction no longer suited to his temperament and left his poem unfinished putting the blame on shoulder of Milton. He was a typical romantic poets taking high flight in the undisclosed territories to avoid death, disease and destruction which gripped English society up to the brink keeping him restless and gasping ceaselessly.

The Eve of St. Agnes is a romantic narrative poem of 42 Spenserian stanzas depicting the life and belief in the middle ages which is a typical romantic poem which finds relief in the world other than that which the poet represents. In this poem the tradition of St. Agnes is combines spirituality or religious practice with the earnest desire of a young woman to glimpse her future husband.. Madeline is

so much involved in the potential of the ritual to reveal the identity of her future husband she does not notice when other men approach her to the party. Closely tied to the theme that religious and romantic longings are intertwined is the idea that man can gain heavenly favour through their love for a beautiful and pure woman. The woman is seen as a pathway to God's favour. Porphyro speaks about seeking out Madeline as if she were someone to be worshipped.

The poem begins with the description of the Beadsman praying for the sinners of the world in a cold chapel. Madeline is described as pure and angelic and her moral saintliness has been elevated to a new height.