

John Doe

Mrs. Lamp

AP Lit.

25 February 2021

★ Solid overall

-needs more E

-some issues w/ structure & claims

-cover structure as well as style

Islands of Sorrow

Matthew Arnold's 1852 poem "To Marguerite: Continued" begins by comparing human beings to islands because they have drifted away from each other and are now isolated. This poem describes how each human is, unfortunately, alone in this life through a metaphor that humans are islands in an open sea, lonely and unattached. However, despite this separation, the speaker is aware of the islands' longing to be connected again, as they were once one congruent continent. The speaker describes their sadness at being separated, and by analogy, the deep human sadness at being separate from one another & ^{the} human desire for connection to other human beings. [The poem expresses the desire for human connection and intimacy through comparing islands to humans; it explains how people were once close and connected,] and it blames God for putting humans in a ^{painful} ~~conflicting~~ position. Therefore, this poem evokes a somber and melancholy mood by making readers consider that humans used to be closer, as the islands used to be a continent, but now, everyone is alone in the world.

already said this

The image of the separated islands floating alone in the sea shows what Arnold thinks man's isolation is like (Arnold 1). In stanza 2, audio imagery of the nightingale singing its lovely notes (10) demonstrates a small connection between the islands (11-2), as sound on one can be heard on another. Later, in stanza 3, Arnold writes that even those small amounts of communication leave the islands in despair (13) because knowing they are so close only leaves them craving connection even more. He suggests that the islands want to merge in order that they might communicate more (18), but that can never be: their fate is to be alone and isolated.

use direct quotes to PROVE these ideas more convincingly

In stanza 4, ^{a rhetorical question asks} ~~the speaker questions~~ why someone would put the islands in a situation like this (19-20): they long for interaction and communication, and they suffer pain because they can never really have

actually quote it!

that full connection with one another that they want. He then questions who would want to make these islands suffer (21) and deems God the culprit (22) because he knows that God created them this way.

Besides imagery and rhetorical questions,

Throughout the poem, Matthew Arnold uses metaphors to describe humans' eternal loneliness.

He metaphorically compares life to the "sea" (Arnold 1) and humans to islands that long to be a part of a connected land mass once again. ~~Another metaphor suggests that humans are islands, disconnected from~~

~~each other~~: "Yes! in the sea of life enisled, / With echoing straits between us thrown, / ... / We mortal millions live alone" (1-2, 4). The poem ^{then} explains later on that these islands are separated from each other because someone "bade betwixt their shores to be / The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea" (23-4). Again, these lines seem to blame God for the separation humans feel: they were made to be separated.

However, toward the end, the ^{fact} ~~belief~~ that the islands were once connected emerges: "For surely once, they feel, we were / Parts of a single continent!" (15-6). If God created us to be together and not separated, why then are we separated so badly now? Is it our own fault? The poem does not seem to answer this question; instead, it simply laments the reality of our loneliness.

When the poet personifies the islands by having them talk to and tell the reader they have a "longing like despair" (13) ^{as he does here:} "For surely once, they feel, we were / Parts of a single continent!" (15-6), he more vividly expresses the human race's everlasting sadness because of each person's separation from each other person. By personifying the islands, he makes them more sympathetic in the reader's eyes, and readers feel even more sorrowful about how the islands can hear from other islands "The nightingales divinely sing; / And lovely notes, from shore to shore, / Across the sounds and channels pour—" (10-2), yet they cannot reach or connect with those other islands.

The poem's imagery also works to create a dejected and melancholy mood. To emphasize the islands' detachment from one another and their own downheartedness, Matthew Arnold not only uses personification, but he also paints a visual and audio image of the "echoing straits between [them]" (2). This tells readers that the islands are aware of one another but, again, they cannot reach each other, and this evokes a compassionate and sympathetic mood within the reader.

use a
Quote

POOR
TR

repetitive
& awkward.

This imagery makes readers wonder:

"when he uses 'we'"

XA

Other imagery that contributes to the ~~tone~~ and mood of the poem includes the imagery of night: "the moon their hollows lights, / And they are swept by balms of spring, / And in their glens, on starry nights [...]" (7-9). The nighttime imagery adds a downcast feeling to the poem's ~~tone~~, as darkness makes the scene even more melancholy.

One last example of imagery that helps build up a sad ~~tone~~ is the touch-based and visual description of how eternal the islands' loneliness truly is: "The islands feel the enclaspings flow, / And then their endless bounds they know" (5-6). This description of the water swirling around and separating the islands highlights the idea that all humans are ultimately alone in life, separated by the "water" of life itself.

In the end, a lonely, separated, and broken feeling emerges through this poem. It suggests that we are all alone in this life; we simply coexist near one another, aware of each other's presence but never able to truly touch or connect. In the end, as the poem says, "We mortal millions live alone." (4).

the tone of stanza 2 is not clearly dejected yet

Nice conclusion focused on the message

↑
Excellent way to end!

Work Cited

Matthew, Arnold. "To Marguerite: Continued." Poetry Foundation, 31 Jan. 2022,

www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43609/to-marguerite-continued.



↑
Excellent
work on hand

Poetry Explication Rubric

(5 pts. each)	Poor X (-2 / -3)	Good ✓ (-1)	Strong ☆ (-0)
1. Intro: Starts with a clear & accurate summary of the poem. Covers key elements, in order, while still being <u>succinct</u> . States title and author.		-1/2	
2. Claims: Makes deep, significant, <u>varied</u> , and accurate claims about meaning, style, craft, and structure X	-1.5		
3. Evidence: Provides ample, apt, and <u>specific</u> references to words, lines, and stanzas in support of every claim (@ least 6 quotes) XXXXXXXX	-3		
4. Analysis: explanations are accurate, clear, thorough, logical, perceptive, & sophisticated XX		-1	
5. Structure: makes a new paragraph when appropriate, transitions well, & orders ideas logically XX		-1	
6. Citation: uses MLA citation correctly, both in-text and in a Works Cited page II		-1/2	
7. Writing is clear, concise, natural, & mostly free from error III			✓
8. Word choices, claims, & analysis demonstrate the student's strong command of literary terms (use @ least three terms) does not cover structure @ all		-1/2	✓

Off-topic essays will earn 0 points
& will need to be re-written

(Points earned + MLA e.c.) = 33.5 / 40

A = 36-40

B = 32-35.5

C = 28-31.5

D = 24-27.5