



**ANALYSIS OF LOVE DESIRE REFLECTED IN “FIRST LOVE” POEM  
BY JOHN CLARE**

**A FINAL PROJECT**

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

I states truthfully that this project is compiled by me without taking the results from other research in any university, in S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree and diploma. In addition, I ascertain that I do not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned in the bibliography.

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## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

*In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity. (Albert Einstein)*

*Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard. (Tim Notke)*

*Check once again when you are completely sure that you have done your best.*

*(B.J Habibie)*

*This final project is dedicated to my beloved parents, family and friends.*

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The writer realizes that this final project is still far from perfect. He, therefore, will be glad to receive any constructive criticism and recommendation to make this final project better.

Finally, the writer expects that this final project will be useful to the reader who wants to learn something about love especially love that reflected in the poem or other literary works.

Semarang, 3 August 2015

Furiandanu Setyo P

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## **ABSTRACT**

The writer discusses love desire in poem of John Clare entitled “First Love”. The purpose of this study is to understand the poem through analyzing intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the poem. The methods used were library research and structural approach. By using the method of library research, the writer collects some information and document that support the process of analysis. The structural approach used by the writer to discover and analyze intrinsic element inside the poem. The extrinsic element analysis discusses about love desire in this poem by using theory of love by Erich Fromm. The result of the study shows how deep the poet’s love desire and consistency of loving her are, although the girl does not love him.

**Keyword: Love desire, love poem, erotic love**

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

The word of literature derives from Latin *littera* which means letter or acquaintance with letters. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their book *Theory of Literature* explain that literature is creative, an art (1942: 15). It means that literature is a process of creative imagination, thoughts and feelings contain ideas, concepts and emotions after everything processed for writing work.

According to *Sounds and Sense* by Laurence Perrine (1984: 3), Poetry might be defined as a kind of language that says more and says it more intensely than does ordinary language. According to *Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* by Kennedy and Gioia (1991: xix), Poetry is a rhythmical composition of words expressing an attitude, designed to surprise and delight, and to arouse an emotional response. A poem can speak more than other literary works such as drama and prose, because it creates a "talking picture" of something. This is a portrait of an inner experience that is represented by the words of great significance. Therefore, it is more difficult to understand the true meaning of the poem.

The writer chooses John Clare's poem because he is a famous Romantic Poet who wrote many poems which tells about love. These poems are "Secret Love", "First Love", "A World for Love", "Merry Maid", etc. He is one of the Romantic Poets in the Romantic Period because he spent his life in 1793 until 1864.

The writer assumes that this poetry tells the readers about someone's feeling when they fall in love. Besides, this poem has strong attraction for readers because the author used interesting expression that was able to make readers imagine the desire of falling in love.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to understand the poem deeper by analyzing the elements of poetry. In addition, the specific purpose of this study is to understand love desire reflected in poem "First Love" by John Clare.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

In this project, the writer tries to analyze intrinsic and extrinsic element of the poem. In intrinsic section, the writer will explain about imagery, simile, and rhyme. In extrinsic section, the writer will explain about love desire represented in the poem "First Love" by John Clare. In order to analyze this poem, the writer used library research and structural approach as the method of research. Library research is data collection method by collecting several sources and made an analysis from that. The writer used structural approach to explain intrinsic aspect in the poem. Furthermore, the writer used extrinsic approach to analyze extrinsic aspect. The writer will concern in love issue.

## CHAPTER II

### THE POET AND THE POEM

#### 2.1 The Poet

Clare was born on July 13, 1793, in Helpston, a village in the English region of Northamptonshire. His father Parker Clare was a farm worker and, Clare wrote in an autobiographical sketch quoted in John Clare in context, "one of fate's chance-lings who drop into the world without the honor of matrimony." Two of Clare's three siblings, including a twin sister, died in infancy, and Clare grew up in grinding rural poverty. He was working in the fields with his father by age 10. Clare's mother, despite her own illiterate state, was a believer in education, and Clare went to school with local tutors for about three months of the year - scanty by modern standards or by those of a noble youth in his own time, but enough to open a new world that was unknown to his peers. His early reading exercises consisted of working his way through the family Bible and prayer books.

Clare liked poetry from the start, and an uncle gave him a book of poems by John Pomfret when he was 11. Two years later he acquired a copy of a long and well-known nature poem cycle, James Thomson's *The Seasons of 1730*. The poem, he said (as quoted on the John Clare Page website), made his heart "twitter with joy." He dove over a wall at a local estate, Burghley House, and hid in a forested area so that he could read it undisturbed, and on his way home he composed his first poem, "The Morning Walk."

Clare tried out his poems on his parents, at first claiming that they had been written by someone else but gradually gaining confidence. Clare's material circumstances did not improve during this period. He spent several years in the Northamptonshire Militia and worked as a limeburner, a filthy, dangerous job involving the incineration of limestone to produce a variety of useful agricultural and industrial chemicals. Clare fell in love twice, once with a farm girl named Mary Joyce, and then, in 1820, with Martha "Patty" Turner, who became his wife.

By that time, Clare had accumulated a collection of poems and spread his literary wings. In the town of Stamford he met a bookstore owner named Edward Drury and a local editor, Octavius Gilchrist. Drury sent him to London to meet a publisher cousin, John Taylor, who had issued some of John Keats's poetry. In 1820, Taylor published Clare's Poems *Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery*.

## 2.2 The Poem

### First Love

By John Clare

I ne'er was struck before that hour  
With love so sudden and so sweet,  
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower  
And stole my heart away complete.  
My face turned pale as deadly pale,  
My legs refused to walk away,  
And when she looked, what could I ail?  
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face  
And took my eyesight quite away,  
The trees and bushes round the place  
Seemed midnight at noonday.  
I could not see a single thing,  
Words from my eyes did start—  
They spoke as chords do from the string,  
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice?  
Is love's bed always snow?  
She seemed to hear my silent voice,  
Not love's appeals to know.  
I never saw so sweet a face  
As that I stood before.

My heart has left its dwelling-place

And can return no more.

## CHAPTER III

### LITERARY REVIEW

#### 3.1 Intrinsic Element

##### 3.1.1 Imagery

Kennedy defined Imagery as a word or sequence of words that refers to any sensory experience (1991: 569). There are seven types of imagery, that is, Visual, Auditory, Olfactory, Gustatory, Tactile, Kinesthetic, and Organic. However this project only focus on organic Imagery. Organic Imagery is imagery that pertains to feelings of the body, including hunger, thirst, fatigue, etc. An example can be seen from Robert Frost's poem, *Spring Pools* below:

*The trees **drinking** up the pools and along with it, the flowers*

The sentence “*drinking up the pools*” shows a kind of internal sensation experience, indicates that something (the trees) is thirsty, very thirsty.

##### 3.1.2 Simile

Kennedy described that simile is a comparison of two things, indicated by someone connective, usually like, as, than, or a verb such as resembles (1991: 587). An example of simile can be seen from Robert Burns's poem *A Red, Red Rose* below:

*O my Luve's **like a red, red rose***



The quotation above showed that Frost compares his lover as beautiful as red rose by using connective “like”.

### 3.1.3 Rhyme

Kennedy also described that rhyme is two or more words or phrases contain an identical or similar vowel-sound, usually accented, and the consonant-sounds (if any) that follow vowel-sound are identical (1991: 629). The example of rhyme can be found in Charlotte Mew’s poetry *Farmer’s Bride*

*But sure enough she wasn't **there**  
Lying awake with her wide brown **stare**.*

The word “there” and “stare” has a similar sound, so it’s consider as rhyme.

### 3.2 Extrinsic Element

Fromm in his book *The Art of Loving* divides love based on its objects into five types, which are Brotherly Love, Motherly Love, Erotic Love, Self-Love, and Love of God. In this project, the writer will only use the Erotic Love to analyze the poem. Erotic Love is love between two persons who fall in love, but in this poem, there is only one person who fall in love because the other one does not have the same feeling. Therefore, erotic love in this poem classified as unrequited love. As Fromm describes that if love were only a feeling, there would be no basis for the promise to love each other forever (1956: 56). Then Fromm states that erotic love requires certain specific or high individual elements that exist between some people but not between all (1956: 57). When someone loves somebody, he certainly has

strong feeling with her. The feeling arises due to the influence of emotion that exist. As Fromm describes that love is supposed to be the outcome of a spontaneous emotional reaction, of suddenly being gripped by an irresistible feeling (1956: 56). From that irresistible feeling, love desire is appear. According to Hornby in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defined desire as a strong wish to have or do (1995: 315). Certainly, someone who falls in love experiences a lot of emotional sensation that causing irresistible feeling as stated before. This irresistible feeling lead him to desire to loving her. This experience known as love desire.

## CHAPTER IV

### LOVE DESIRE REFLECTED IN FIRST LOVE POEM “FIRST LOVE” BY JOHN CLARE

#### 4.1 Intrinsic Element

##### 4.1.1 Organic Imagery

There are organic imagery in every stanza in the poem. The imagery in first stanza can be seen in bolded word below.

With **love** so sudden and so **sweet**,  
And **stole my heart** away complete.  
My face **turned pale** as deadly pale,  
My legs **refused** to walk away,  
And when she looked, what could I **ail**?  
My life and all seemed **turned** to clay.

**Love** is a word of organic imagery. The poet uses the word **love** to show the readers that he is falling in love with someone. Then the poet uses the word **sweet** to describe his love. **Sweet** means lovely, pleasant, and cheerful. It shows that he feels very happy when he is falling in love. Next, he says that his heart is stolen away. It is kind of inner-feeling that means he is interested in the girl attraction. He also says that his face turned pale. Pale face in this case is physical phenomena when someone feels so shy. It is the effect of his emotion when he is attracted by the girl. In the next line, he uses word **refused** to indicate that he cannot move at the time. It means that he feels freeze when seeing the girl. After that line, the poet uses word

**ail** to ask himself. Ail means sickness or trouble in mind or body. This expression shows that he feels so nervous. Then in the last line he describe that his life and all turned to clay. Clay is soft and sticky soil that commonly used for making pot, brick, etc. It shows the readers his feeling of helplessness when the girl looked at him as result of his nervous.

And then my blood **rushed** to my face  
And **took** my eyesight quite away,  
I **could not see** a single thing  
And blood **burnt** round my heart

In the second stanza, the poet uses expression **blood rushed to my face**. When there is a lot of blood in a face, the skin color of the face looked red. This expression shows that his face blushes when he meets the girl. It indicates that he feels very shy. Next, the poet uses expression **took my eyesight away** as if he is blind after blood rushing his face. This expression indicates that he gets love that is blind. Next, he says that he cannot see anything. In this line, the poet emphasizes his very deep love. Then in the last line, he uses words **burnt round heart**. Burnt in this line means intense, strong, and terrific. It indicates that his love is very deep and strong.

My heart has **left** its dwelling-place  
And can return no more.

In the last stanza, he says that his heart leaves its place and can return no more. In this line, he emphasizes his statement in first stanza that the girl steals his heart. This line also shows that he will always love her and his love will last forever.

#### 4.1.2 Simile

The simile are found only in the first and the second stanza. The simile can be seen in bolded words below.

Her face it bloomed **like a sweet flower**

My face turned pale **as deadly pale**

My life and all **seemed turned to clay**

Words from my eyes did start—

They spoke **as chords do from the string**

The poet compares the girl's **face** with **a sweet flower**. Flower is beautiful and colorful plant. It indicates that the girl is very pretty, cute and charming. Next, he compares his **pale face** with **deadly pale**. In this point, pale is a wooden stake or post used for fence. It means that his pale face looks like the color of wooden stake or post. This statement is also supported by previous analysis that he is shy and his pale face as result of emotional effect when he is attracted by the girl. Then he compares his **life** with **clay**. As stated in previous analysis, clay is soft and sticky soil that commonly used for making pot, brick, etc. It shows that his helplessness condition is represented by clay. The last, he compares **words** with **chords**. Chord is a group of notes that sounded together as basis of harmony. The chords reflects kind of strong emotion or feeling he sends when he is making eye contact with the girl.

### 4.1.3 Rhyme

The poet uses *ababcdcd* rhyme scheme in every stanza of poem. The analysis of rhyme sound in every word can be seen below.

I ne'er was struck before that **hour**  
With love so sudden and so **sweet**,  
Her face it bloomed like a sweet **flower**  
And stole my heart away **complete**.  
My face turned pale as deadly **pale**,  
My legs refused to walk **away**,  
And when she looked, what could I **ail**?  
My life and all seemed turned to **clay**.

The word “hour” [ou(ə)r] in the first line has similar sound with the word “flower” [ˈflou(-ə)r] in the third line. The word “sweet” [swēt] in the second line has similar sound with the word “complete” [kəmˈplēt] in the fourth line. The word “pale” [pāl] in the fifth line has similar sound with the word “ail” [āl] in the seventh line. The word “away” [əˈwā] in the sixth line has similar sound with the word “clay” [klā] in the eighth line. The first stanza has perfectly *ababcdcd* rhyme scheme. The rhyme scheme makes the poem beautiful to read. Every pair of rhyme gives stronger feeling to readers about the poem emotion expressed in the first stanza. It will help the readers to understand the meaning of this stanza.

And then my blood rushed to my **face**  
And took my eyesight quite **away**,  
The trees and bushes round the **place**  
Seemed midnight at **noonday**.

I could not see a single **thing**,  
Words from my eyes did **start**—  
They spoke as chords do from the **string**,  
And blood burnt round my **heart**.

The word “face” [fās] in the ninth line has similar sound with the word “place” [plās] in the eleventh line. The word “away” [ə'wā] in the tenth line has similar sound with the word “noonday” ['nōon, dā] in the twelfth line. The word “thing” [THiNG] in the thirteenth line has similar sound with the word “string” [striNG] in the fifteenth line. The word “start” [stārt] in the fourteenth line has similar sound with the word “heart” [hārt] in the sixteenth line. The second stanza also has perfectly *ababcdcd* rhyme scheme. This rhyme scheme keeps this stanza in harmony with the first stanza. It give the readers experience of ongoing emotion starting from the first stanza. From that ongoing emotion, the readers will understand that there is relative meaning between every stanza.

Are flowers the winter's **choice**?  
Is love's bed always **snow**?  
She seemed to hear my silent **voice**,  
Not love's appeals to **know**.  
I never saw so sweet a **face**  
As that I stood **before**.  
My heart has left its dwelling-**place**  
And can return no **more**.

The word “choice” [CHois] in the seventeenth line has similar sound with the word “voice” [vois] in the nineteenth line. The word “snow” [snō] in the

eighteenth line has similar sound with the word “know” [nō] in the twentieth line. The word “face” [fās] in the twenty first line has similar sound with the word “place” [plās] in the twenty third line. The word “before” [bi'fôr] in the twenty second line has similar sound with the word “more” [môr] in the last line. It is the same as the first and the second stanza, the last stanza also has perfectly *ababcdcd* rhyme scheme. By using same rhyme scheme in every stanza, this poem serves a kind of simple repeating pattern facilitating memorization. The readers will easily remember the whole line of poem and its meaning. Every pair of rhyme in the last stanza also gives stronger emotion to the readers about his consistency of strong feeling reflected in the poem.

#### 4.2 Extrinsic Element

The poet expresses his feeling in the entire stanzas of the poem. The analysis of every stanza can be seen below.

I ne'er was struck before that hour  
With love so sudden and so sweet,  
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower  
And stole my heart away complete.  
My face turned pale as deadly pale,  
My legs refused to walk away,  
And when she looked, what could I ail?  
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

In the first line and the second line, the poet says that he **was struck with sudden and sweet love**. In imagery analysis, word **love** and **sweet** show that he is very happy when he is falling in love. The sweet love he feels reflects the outcome of a



spontaneity of his emotional reaction and irresistible feeling. This condition appears when someone meets specific or high individual elements that exist in somebody and lead to strong feeling. As reflected in the next line, he admires her face. The poet has already compared her **face** to **flower** in simile analysis. It indicates that beautiful is specific individual elements that exist in the girl. After that, he says that his heart is stolen away. This line shows his strong feeling to the girl that arises due to influence of emotion that exists. The emotion appears as the result of his admire. It has already been explained in imagery analysis for the words **stole my heart** that he is interested in the girl attraction. The strong feeling in this line also reflects his desire of loving her begins. His love desire influences his attitude represented in the next line. From the fifth line until the last line in the first stanza shows his attitude that represents his outcome of emotional reaction gripped by irresistible feeling. It has already been explained in imagery analysis that he is shy and nervous when he meets the girl.

And then my blood rushed to my face  
And took my eyesight quite away,  
The trees and bushes round the place  
Seemed midnight at noonday.  
I could not see a single thing,  
Words from my eyes did start—  
They spoke as chords do from the string,  
And blood burnt round my heart.

In this second stanza, the poet still expresses his emotional reaction as the effect of his strong feeling. According to imagery analysis for words **rushed** and

**took** in the first and the second line, he is blushed after meeting the girl and he gets love that is blind after that. The experience of his love indicates that his emotional reaction is gripped by his irresistible feeling. In the mind of someone who gets love that is blind, there is only the person whom he loves. Therefore, this kind of love also reflects that his love desire increases as result of the emotional reaction. The fifth line until the last line, show his emotion and feeling that flow away and he cannot control it. It has already been stated in simile analysis, when he compares **words** that spoken from his eyes like **chords**, it reflects kind of emotion or feeling he sends when he is making eye contact with the girl. Then, it has already been explained in imagery analysis for word **burnt** in the last line, it means that his love is very deep and strong. He really has strong feeling with her. This strong feeling reflects his great desire to loving her forever.

Are flowers the winter's choice?  
Is love's bed always snow?  
She seemed to hear my silent voice,  
Not love's appeals to know.  
I never saw so sweet a face  
As that I stood before.  
My heart has left its dwelling-place  
And can return no more.

Based on simile analysis, it shows that the poet relates the girl to flower. From words **the winter's choice**, it means that winter chooses the girl. It indicates that the poet relates himself to winter. Winter is the coldest season of the year and there is no flower lives in winter. When he relates himself to winter, it shows that

he is unappealing, rigid and unenjoyable person. In the next line, he asks that **love's bed is always snow**. The meaning of bed in this line is an area of ground, typically in a garden, where flowers and plants are grown. Snow is ice crystal that has cold temperature and it appears in winter. This line represents his life of love that is boring and not interesting as cold as snow. It has already been stated before that love requires certain specific or high individual elements that exist in someone. In his side, the girl is very interesting, but in her side, he may not be interesting. In the third and the fourth line, it actually reflects that the girl know that he admires her. His emotion appears when he is making eye contact with the girl, but the girl does not give any attention to him. Therefore, his love is unrequited love because his love is only in his feeling and there is not any promise to love each other. In the seventh and the last line, he emphasizes his strong feeling and it is supported by imagery analysis for word **left** that he will always love her and his love will last forever. It shows his final statement of his love desire although she does not love him, he will always love her.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

The readers can learn and understand the meaning and the message in the poem through intrinsic and extrinsic aspect of the poem. The imagery of the poem gives a description of the poet's love, especially his strong feeling to the girl. The simile gives an illustration of the girl's beauty and his emotional reaction. The rhyme makes the poem more beautiful to read and gives stronger feeling to the readers. In the analysis of extrinsic element, we can learn that the poet's love desire show how deep the poet's love desire and consistency of loving her are, although the girl does not love him.

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