

Alabanza: In Praise of Local 100 Poem Analysis

Posted on August 26, 2021

Introduction:

This poem is written by Martin Espada, who pays tribute to the forty-three members of Local 100 who were killed in the 9/11 attacks. These workers were working in the North Tower, and they were present in the World Restaurant of the World Trade Center Building.

BODY-A

In the first two stanzas, the poet describes the fast and quick actions of the workers and their dedication to the work. The poet has animated the worker's action with the metamorphic music of eggs and bread by the cook from Fajardo.

The poet has linked the blue eyes of the chef with the Spanish and American invasion of Puerto Rico. [Martin Espada](#) has also resembled the "oye" inscribed on the shoulder of the chef as a scream that has shared its color with several languages across the Globe. The poet didn't limit the phrase "oye" to a nation or culture, as he thinks it is widespread.

MAIN THEME:

The poet wishes to distract our attention from the deceptive and tragic attack to a very deep sense of determination and sacrifice of the laborers in that attack. Martin Espada desired us to direct our mind's eye to the fact that it was the workers who suffered in actuality in most of the military campaigns, business, or agrarian contracts. By fusing the multiplicity of workers, the poet is trying to highlight that the main struggle for labor is universal on the whole, and it must be appreciated.

Discussion

The poem "Alabanza" is divided into seven parts, of which the first six parts are included from the previous section written by Espada. As one of the most famous and renowned Latino poets of his time, Espada has written his emotional response to the 9/11 attacks. Especially when he realized that the attack had killed so many immigrant workers at the World Trade Center restaurant, the poet pictured the emotional situation and conveyed her feelings in the form of Alabanza, and paid tribute

to the workers.

The poem's structure is divided into many parts, and each part presents a distinctive viewpoint to keep the reader engaged with the scenario created in each of the stanzas. Each Stanza has a new rhythm that forces the reader in a new direction. The title of the poem, "Alabanza," is a Spanish word that means "praise." The poet is actually praising the immigrant workers who remain determined and lost their lives in the 9/11 attacks.

The poet also signified the importance of life by stating that the lives that were lost on that day were as valuable as those of firemen or soldiers who dedicated their lives to their country.

"Praise the cook with a shaven head and a tattoo on his shoulder that said Oye, a blue-eyed Puerto Rican with people from Fajardo, the harbor of pirates centuries ago." Martin Espada, Alabanza p. 433

In the above quotation, the form of free verse has directed the readers to understand several key points. The poem interlinks the use of rhyme and rhythm and exhibits numerous purposes by explaining the attack, which has affected the life of every citizen of the United States. The quotation also illustrates the life of every individual in the United States and portrays it in free narratives.

"Praise the kitchen in the morning, where the gas burned blue on every stove," Martin Espada, Alabanza p.433

In this stanza, the poet is relating his sadness that comes to the people of the United States on that day, the horror the families of the fatalities have gone through, and the fear that the American people have stuck in their hearts for those workers who were working on that day.

"The thunder wilder than thunder" Martin Espada, Alabanza p. 434

In the above stanza, the poet says that though it is struck by lightning, the lives of many people who were working that day are lost. Martin Espada is so horrified by the brutality of the condition that he is unable to express it more easily. In the end, the poet leaves a message to their readers to plead for humanity and locate a sense of solidity in the tragedy. The poem is unique in its style as it is not written on the basis of a continuous rant, and it conveys its message in a very realistic and emotional way. The poet has awakened the human potential and provides a very interesting approach to all the readers, explaining the impact of the tragedy of 9/11 on the people of the United States.

Conclusion

The Poem's structure is divided into many parts, and each part has its own perspective, and each stanza has its own rhythm that attracts the reader in a different direction. The poem transforms itself from mourning into praise in a very beautiful manner and praises the workers' dedication and hard work who lost their lives in the 9/11 attacks. The poet has elicited the meaning out of the attack and focuses on the long-term effects of the tragedy on the people of the United States. By closely

analyzing the poem, one has found that the poet has used many tragic, dark, and harsh words. The poet has also related the misery that has befallen the American people on that day, and the horror that the families of the victims have gone through

Work Cited

Espada, Martín. "Alabanza: in praise of local 100." *Labor History* 44.4 (2003): 433-434.