



# **Dust of Snow**

## **Dust of Snow Introduction**

The poem “Dust of Snow” by Robert Frost is a simple and short poem, yet with a deeper and larger meaning. The poet explains how an act as petty as experiencing snow on one’s body can brighten one’s day up. The message of the poem is put into words by Robert Frost:

**The way a crow**

**Shook down on me**

**The dust of snow**

**From a hemlock tree**

Word meanings

Shook- shake

Hemlock- a poisonous tree with small white flowers

The poem is set in a scene where the poet is in a bad mood and is walking by a tree, a hemlock tree. Hemlock tree is a poisonous tree. As he passes by, a crow happens to throw some snow dust on him. Whether it falls on his head or shoulders is unknown as there is no specific mention in the poem. Also, the readers are left in doubt about the bird's specific action. Whether the crow was landing, shivering with cold, re adjusting itself on the branch or taking off, it happened to send some particles of snow upon the author. Here, the two agents of nature, the hemlock tree and the crow are signifiers of sadness and gloom just like the poet's mood was in the opening scene.

**Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.  
Rued- held in regret**

For reasons unknown, the author was having a terrible day. But the falling of the snow on his head lifted his mood instantly. He had already spent his day in a bad mood but the rest of it was saved by the crow and the hemlock tree. Generally, hemlock tree and crow are used for negative references but the poet used them beautifully to portray that inauspicious things can bring joy and happiness too. One must not take things for granted and should be open and accept whichever way the nature chooses to bless us.

## **Dust of Snow Literary Devices**

- i. Rhyme Scheme- abab cdcd
- ii. Alliteration- the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

The instances of alliteration are as follows-

- i. Has given my heart
- ii. And saved some part

## Dust of Snow Literary Devices

- iii. inversion - when the structure of a sentence is changed by the poet to create rhyme, this poetic license is called inversion. In stanza 1, inversion can be seen.
- iv. assonance - the prominence of a vowel sound throughout a line is called assonance. In stanza 1, line 2 - “Shook down on me” - ‘o’ sound is prominent.
- v. enjambment - when the same sentence continues to the next line without the use of any punctuation marks, it is called enjambment. It has been used through out the poem.



## **Dust of Snow Summary**

The short poem by Robert Frost throws light upon the unimaginable healing power of nature and tiny things. From a bad mood to ill-health, there is nothing that can't be cured by nature. The author was experiencing one such bad day when a crow's movement near a hemlock tree dusted snow upon him. The snow instantly makes him happier. His day gets a lot better.

Thus, the supremacy of nature as a whole made him realise how petty his problem was. The fact that hemlock tree is poisonous combined with crow being the indicator of doom and fear are used in the poem as the carriers of happiness in the life of narrator is ironical. The poet, through these objects has tried to highlight that sometimes creatures linked with negative aspects of life can be the bringer of change and happiness. Being outdoors in nature, with all its unpredictability can benefit anyone, anywhere at any time.



Thank you