

Poem No.

20

# In Broken Images

(Robert Graves)

He is quick, thinking in clear images;

I am slow, thinking in broken images.

He becomes dull, trusting to his clear images;

I become sharp, mistrusting my broken images.

Trusting his images, he assumes their relevance;

Mistrusting my images, I question their relevance.

Assuming their relevance, he assumes the fact;

Questioning their relevance, I question the fact.

When the fact fails him, he questions his senses;

When the fact fails me, I approve my senses.

He continues quick and dull in his clear images;

I continue slow and sharp in my broken images.

He in a new confusion of his understanding;

I in a new understanding of my confusion.

## Glossary

assumes	undertakes
relevance	connection with what is discussed

## Theme

A person should remain inquisitive about the images of life whether they are broken or clear. One, who trusts one's clear images without proof, becomes dull in one's life whereas the other who mistrusts his broken images becomes sharp and intelligent. Nothing should be taken for granted and one should remain thoughtful and considerate about the facts of life.

Inquiry into the nature of things leads one to understand and accept the ground realities of life.

## EXERCISE

Answer the following questions.

1. What is the state of two persons, one who trusts clear images and the other who mistrusts the broken images?
2. Why does a person question his senses when the facts fail him?
3. Who is in a new confusion of his understanding?
4. What is the moral lesson of the poem?
5. Rewrite the poem in past tense.
6. Paraphrase the first four lines of the poem in your own words.
7. What conclusion does the poet draw in the last two lines of the poem? Write in detail.