

## **Central Idea**

The poem from “*I Explain a Few Things*” written by Pablo Neruda is a lamentation on Spanish Civil War. In this poem the poet questions his own attitude by into composing poems about dreams and beauties of his homeland. But at the same time, he clarifies that how could he do it when there was blood everywhere in the streets of Madrid, the blood of Spain’s posterity (blood of children). The poem simply reflects the fact that there would not be any progress and prosperity, whatsoever, if the war clouds continue to gather on the whole world.

**Line (1 - 11):** The poet says that he lived in a quarter in Madrid (which is the capital of Spain) the church’s towers with bells, tall structures having clocks at he tops, vast areas of land densely covered with trees were the distinctive features of Spain. All the noise and activity by people could be seen every time. From there one could see the dry face of the Kingdom of Castile (traditional central region constituting more that one-quarter of the area of peninsular Spain. The region formed the core of the kingdom of Castile, under which Spain was united in the last 15<sup>th</sup> an early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries) like a rough ocean.

The Poet’s house was named the house of flowers because geraniums sprouted everywhere around it, thus, making it an eye-catching place. The scenery of the house along with its surroundings looked pleasant and attractive giving a feeling of satisfaction or enjoyment. The house with dogs and little children looked beautiful every time.

**Line (12 - 22):** Here the poet calls upon the famous poets of Spain – Raul, Rafael, Alberti, Fredrico Garcia Lorca (all poets friends) who were assassinated in the Spanish civil war and who are now beneath the earth to speak in his favour that his house was really a beautiful sight to look at on the balconies of which the light of June gave them the strength and enthusiasm to compose beautiful poems. The roofs of the houses had such a pattern that the rays of the sun fell directly on them, thus, providing great relief from the strong and cold winds whose direction was caught and given by the weather vane. In the chilly days, the sun would comfort them (people) all. A good crop of potatoes and tomatoes stretched down to the sea.

**Line (23 - 35):** One morning all of a sudden large fires moved rapidly towards the capital and burned everything around. The leaping flames out of bonfires caused destruction and devastation. The flames completely covered every living creature.

There was a pall (large mass) of smoke everywhere. All the things were burning, rather hidden in the smoke produced by large number of guns. Thugs willfully destroyed works of art, public and private property and the beauties of nature. The flames engulfed the planes, as well as, the Moors. The young ruffians and hooligans with the approval of the Dukes and Duchesses and with the blessings of friars acted in a most destructive ways. Large scale devastation occurred owing to their violent activities. They slaughtered the children future generation of Spain. The blood of the children gushed out from the streets of Madrid (capital of Spain).

**Line (36 - 54):** The bad and wicked people were busy in slaughtering the innocent people. They made horrible noise which sent shivers up and down the spine of the innocent people. They destroyed and damaged everything. Beauties of nature alongwith the works of art. Those people were Jackals who could be driven away by Jackals only. They were stones which even dry thistles would be afraid to bite. They were wipers whom even wipers would hate. The treacherous and spiteful vipers with their vipers tongue injected hatred among innocent people. They opposed the creative skills of the noted poets of Spain. Feeling a great sense of pride, they killed the poets and generals and sliced them like a knife in the butter. They were disloyal – traitors (in the guise of Generals) who betrayed the nation. But the poet is of the idea, rather he is sure that against these unfaithful persons (traitors) the blood of Spain will rise up. The burnt houses, the weakened and shattered (extremely tired) Spain, the disappearance (death) of the beauties of nature has made Spain hollow for some time but it will definitely, certainly and surely rise. It would not disappear (die). From every dead child a gun with eyes will rise and from every crime bullets will take birth. The poet is sure that one day it will happen in the Capital of Spain.

**Line (55 - 62):** In these concluding lines of the poem, the poet says rather admits that he has not composed poems regarding the beauties of his birthplace. He says that his poetry has nothing of the earth, of the leaves, of the great grand volcanoes of his homeland. But at the same time, he clarifies his attitude of neglect. He is agonized and asks how can he do it when the blood of the future generation of Spain is everywhere in its Capital (Madrid).

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