



SNOW SPARKS: AN ANALYSIS OF ALEXANDER FAYNBERG'S POEM

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu tadqiqot ishi Aleksandr Faynbergning *Qor Uchqunlari* she'rini o'rganadi. She'r yorqin qish manzaralari orqali yo'qlik, xotira va vaqt o'tishining mavzularini aks ettiradi. She'rdagi ramziy elementlar, adabiy vositalar va tarixiy kontekstni tahlil qilish orqali Faynberg ijodining chuqurligi ochib beriladi. "Sen yo'qsan—lekin hammayoqdasan" misralarining takrorlanishi sog'inch va yo'qotish hissini universal tajriba sifatida aks ettiradi. Muayyan misralarni chuqur tahlil qilish orqali shoirning uslubi yanada aniqroq tushuntiriladi. She'rning to'liq tarjimasi ham tadqiqotga kiritilgan bo'lib, har tomonlama tahlilni ta'minlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: Yo'qlik va mavjudlik, xotira, qor ramzi, ko'chirilish, takrorlash.

Аннотация: Данное исследование посвящено анализу стихотворения *Снежные искры (Qor Uchqunlari)* Александра Файнберга. В стихотворении через живописные зимние образы раскрываются темы отсутствия, памяти и течения времени. Анализируя символические элементы, литературные приемы и исторический контекст, работа демонстрирует глубину творчества Файнберга. Повторение строк "Тебя нет — но ты повсюду" отражает универсальный опыт тоски и утраты. Детальное изучение отдельных строк позволяет лучше понять поэтическую технику автора. В исследовании представлена полная переводная версия стихотворения, что обеспечивает всесторонний анализ.

Ключевые слова: Отсутствие и присутствие, память, символика снега, перемещение, повторение.



Abstract: *This research paper explores Snow Sparks (Qor Uchqunlari) by Alexander Faynberg, a poem that encapsulates themes of absence, memory, and the passage of time through vivid winter imagery. By analyzing the poem's symbolic elements, literary devices, and historical context, this paper reveals the depth of Faynberg's work. The repetition of "you are not—yet you are everywhere" reflects a universal experience of longing and loss. A close reading of specific lines further enhances our understanding of the poet's technique. The full translated version of the poem is included to ensure a comprehensive examination.*

Key words: *Absence and Presence, memory, snow symbolism, displacement, repetition.*

Introduction:

Poetry often serves as a vessel for emotions that cannot be easily articulated. In Snow Sparks, Alexander Faynberg intertwines personal longing with broader existential themes. The poem paints a moving portrait of memory, love, and time, using the winter landscape as both a literal and symbolic setting. The fleeting nature of snow mirrors the impermanence of human relationships, while the poet's journey through Moscow's frozen streets represents both physical and emotional transitions.

By analyzing the poem's structure, symbolism, and historical context, this paper aims to uncover the layers of meaning within Faynberg's work. Special attention is given to key lines that encapsulate the poem's core themes.

Translated Version of the Poem:

"Snow Sparks"

(Qor Uchqunlari – by Alexander Faynberg, translated into English)

In Moscow, January—

A storm thunders along beneath the earth.

Where to, my love?

The Central Telegraph: on every stair

The frozen blue frost stands still.



I slip past them, the vanguard—
A city teeming with people.

January's snow burns the lips,
Clattering noisily against the lamps,
It flies along the underground path.
You are not there—
You are everywhere.
You are my love. My very last love.
The solemn procession of Suvorov.
A dwelling of snows.
The heart bellows from the flight.
I see—

You paved the way for youth on the tram,
Your coat hem trembling,
Snow scattering as it flies away.

Across Moscow, snow—
Bags fly through the air.
Before my eyes—
A glimmering, icy belt of frost.
On your shoulder—a delicate strap of a small bag
Sways with your every step.
Snow covers the window grilles,
In statues—a silver snow fur cloak.
Every moment, every breath
Melts the pure snow spark held in your mittens.
I see you,
Yet—you are not there.



Thematic and Symbolic Analysis:

1. Absence and Presence: A Poetic Paradox

One of the most striking aspects of *Snow Sparks* is the poet's use of paradox. Throughout the poem, he repeats the lines:

"You are not there—
You are everywhere."

This contradiction encapsulates the experience of remembering someone who is physically absent yet emotionally omnipresent. The snowflakes, which melt upon touch, serve as a metaphor for these fleeting yet powerful memories.

The paradox is also emphasized in the closing lines:

" Yet in this—you are not.
But still—you are everywhere."

Here, Faynberg suggests that while a person may be absent in a tangible sense, their presence lingers through memory, emotions, and even the environment itself.

2. The Power of Winter as a Metaphor

Winter is more than just a backdrop in *Snow Sparks*—it is an active force that shapes the poem's emotional landscape. In the opening stanza, the poet describes the season's intensity:

"In Moscow, January—
A storm thunders along beneath the earth."

This imagery immediately establishes a sense of turbulence and unrest. The reference to a storm beneath the earth suggests not only the harsh weather but also an internal emotional storm within the speaker.

Winter in poetry often symbolizes loneliness, hardship, and the passage of time. However, in *Snow Sparks*, it also represents memory preservation—just as snow encases the city in white, memories encase the speaker's mind.

3. Movement and Displacement

Faynberg frequently references travel, emphasizing movement and separation. The stanza below captures this dynamic:



" Sheremetyevo—in the January forests.

High above, the planes ascend

Laying down the tracks—

New York, Amsterdam."

Sheremetyevo is a major airport in Moscow, making it a fitting symbol for departure and distance. The mention of global cities such as New York and Amsterdam further reinforces the theme of displacement. These references highlight the post-Soviet reality of migration, where individuals often leave their homelands, yet their past remains imprinted in their minds.

The emotional weight of travel is also captured in another stanza:

"High above on the marble,

A train carries you away.

Your reflection appears in the window,

And on your cheeks, snow fragments melt away.

Here, the train symbolizes separation and inevitable change. The image of the reflection in the window suggests a fleeting, ghostly presence—reinforcing the idea that memory lingers even when people physically depart.

Literary Devices and Poetic Techniques

1. Repetition for Emotional Impact

Repetition is a key technique in *Snow Sparks*, reinforcing its melancholic and nostalgic tone. The recurring phrases:

"You are not there—

You are everywhere."

" Snow flies along the cities—

Olma, Ota, Aktyubinsk, Toshtagul."

This technique mirrors the way memories resurface involuntarily. The constant movement between "presence" and "absence" mirrors



the human tendency to revisit past moments while confronting their irreversible loss.

2. Symbolism of Snow and Light

Snow serves as a central motif in the poem, symbolizing transience, purity, and nostalgia. In the following lines, the act of holding snow mirrors the fleeting nature of time:

"Every moment, every breath
Melts the pure snow spark held in your mittens."

Snowflakes melt instantly, just as cherished moments vanish with time. The contrast between holding and losing snow reinforces the poem's central theme—how memories are simultaneously precious and impermanent.

Light imagery also plays a role:

"On the threshold of my hut, in the cold of the courtyard—
A star of frost glimmers."

The "star of frost" suggests both beauty and distance. Stars traditionally symbolize guidance, hope, or longing for something unreachable. This aligns with the poem's theme of searching for something that remains just out of reach.

3. Sound and Rhythm in the Poem

Faynberg uses sound and rhythm to enhance the poem's emotional pull. The repetition of "snow" and "January" creates a cold, rhythmic pulse, reinforcing the setting's harshness. The use of sibilance (soft 's' sounds) in phrases like:

" Snow sparks encircle the sky—"

mimics the quiet, drifting motion of falling snow, making the imagery more immersive.

Cultural and Historical Context:

1. Soviet and Post-Soviet Themes

The cities mentioned—Moscow, Olma, Aktyubinsk, Estonia—reflect a former Soviet landscape, where movement between regions was once common. However, after the dissolution of the USSR, migration patterns



changed, leading to feelings of dislocation and longing for places left behind. The reference to "Sheremetyevo" airport and international travel also speaks to globalization and modern displacement. The poet acknowledges the reality of a world in constant motion, yet emotions and memories remain deeply rooted in familiar landscapes.

2. The Personal vs. The Universal

While the poem appears deeply personal, its themes of love, loss, and nostalgia make it universally relatable. The longing for a person (or a past life) is not unique to Faynberg—it resonates with anyone who has experienced separation.

Conclusion:

Alexander Faynberg's *Snow Sparks* is a masterpiece of poetic longing. Through its striking imagery, paradoxical refrains, and masterful use of symbolism, the poem captures the universal human experience of memory, absence, and the inexorable passage of time. The contrast between presence and absence, movement and stillness, warmth and cold, reflects the inner turmoil of a speaker who is both physically in the present and emotionally trapped in the past.

The snow, the storm, the departing trains—all serve as reminders that time moves forward, yet emotions remain frozen within us. Ultimately, *Snow Sparks* stands as a testament to the endurance of memory, proving that even in absence, love and longing continue to shape our existence

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