

NOSTALGIC /  
REGRETFUL  
T O N E /  
LIKEWISE THE  
MOOD AND  
ATMOSPHERE

A SUGGESTIVE TITLE

Refugee Blues

Say this city has ten million souls,  
Some are living in mansions, some are living in holes:  
Yet there's no place for us, my dear, yet there's no place for us.

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CHORUS/ INCANTATORY RHYTHM

Once we had a country and we thought it fair,  
Look in the atlas and you'll find it there:  
We cannot go there now, my dear, we cannot go there now.

SYNECDOCHE

REPETITION/  
CAESURA

EACH TERCEt CONSISTS OF A COUPLET

In the village churchyard there grows an old yew,  
Every spring it blossoms anew:

VISUAL/NATURE IMAGERY

REPETITION OF NEGATIVE FOR EMPHASIS

Old passports can't do that, my dear, old passports can't do that.

ANTITHESIS

The consul banged the table and said,  
"If you've got no passport you're officially dead";  
But we are still alive, my dear, but we are still alive.

CONSONANCE/ONOMATOPOEIA

ADVERBIAL PHRASE

Went to a committee; they offered me a chair;  
Asked me politely to return next year:  
But where shall we go to-day, my dear, but where shall we go to-day?

VARIED SYNTAX/  
FRAGMENTS/  
INTERROGATIVE/VISUAL  
IMAGERY

Came to a public meeting; the speaker got up and said;  
"If we let them in, they will steal our daily bread";  
He was talking of you and me, my dear, he was talking of you and me.

MOCKING TONE/  
SUBTLE  
REPRESENTATION OF  
THEIR ANGER, AGONY  
AND FRUSTRATION

ONOMATOPOEIA

Thought I heard the thunder rumbling in the sky;  
It was Hitler over Europe, saying, "They must die";  
O we were in his mind, my dear, O we were in his mind.

DIRECT  
SPEECH

REPETITION, CAESURA

Saw a poodle in a jacket fastened with a pin,  
Saw a door opened and a cat let in:  
But they weren't German Jews, my dear, but they weren't German Jews.

VISUAL/  
ANIMAL  
IMAGERY

Went down the harbour and stood upon the quay,  
Saw the fish swimming as if they were free:  
Only ten feet away, my dear, only ten feet away.

INCANTATOR  
RYTHM

Walked through a wood, saw the birds in the trees;  
They had no politicians and sang at their ease:  
They weren't the human race, my dear, they weren't the human race.

NATURE  
IMAGERY

Dreamed I saw a building with a thousand floors,  
A thousand windows and a thousand doors:  
Not one of them was ours, my dear, not one of them was ours.

THE REPETITION OF THE  
NEGATIVES CREATES A TONE  
OF PATHOS AND LIKEWISE, A  
NOSTALGIC ATMOSPHERE.

Stood on a great plain in the falling snow;  
Ten thousand soldiers marched to and fro:  
Looking for you and me, my dear, looking for you and me.

VISUAL  
IMAGERY/  
HYPERBOLE

IRONICALLY AND SUBTLY,  
THERE IS NO USE OF THE  
PRONOUN AT THE  
BEGINNING OF THE STANZA  
WHICH ADDS TO THE  
MOURNFUL TONE

WH Auden