

A Nice Cup of Tea: An Essay Review

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Abstract

The paper aims to review an essay called "A Nice Cup of Tea" by George Orwell. In his essay, Orwell highlighted the rules for making tea by giving every little detail. This paper provides a descriptive review of it by talking about Orwell, the characters in the essay, its summary, strengths, weaknesses and bibliographic information. The essay shows how a regular activity like making tea can be fun. It highlights that the daily process of making tea can be detail-oriented.

Keywords: Review, A Nice Cup of Tea, Fictional, George Orwell, Descriptive, Literature

Introduction

A Nice Cup of Tea is a playful yet detailed essay by George Orwell. It was published in the Evening Standard on 12 January 1946. It is themed around the art and etiquette of making the perfect cup of tea. Orwell is a very famous author whose writings usually involve political and dystopian themes. He is very famous for his works like 'Animal Farm' and '1984.' His essay "A Nice Cup of Tea" is a very different and comparatively light-hearted piece of work. It seems that for him, tea is not just a drink. It is a source of joy, a symbol of comfort and a national identity. In this essay, he shares the steps of making tea using his methodical approach. He makes a perfect blend of humour, personal passion and culture. This essay has added depth to his reputation.

The essay has no proper fictional characters as it is non-fiction with an instructional commentary. Orwell himself is the protagonist who gives his perspective on tea-making. His tone is strong and confident, guiding the readers like a tea master. The other character is tea. It has been personified by him as a beloved friend, which needs to be cherished and respected.

Discussion

Orwell outlines eleven golden rules for making the perfect cup of tea. According to him, every little detail needs to be kept in mind, ranging from selecting the right type of tea (loose leaf over tea bags) to the ideal way of pouring milk (into the tea rather than pouring the milk first). Other details that he focused upon were the quantity of the tea that should be made, the material of the teapot, the state of the pot before starting to make tea, the concentration or intensity of flavour, the temperature of the water, when to stir and the type of cup for drinking. He emphasised two things- the milk must go into the cup after the tea is poured and sugar must not be used as it spoils the original taste of tea. According to him, the tea is meant to be bitter. His firm yet witty tone suggests that these guidelines are not just his personal opinion or preference but near-universal truths. Through this, he highlights British culture and the importance of tea in it. He has symbolised tea as comfort and civility.

The strength of his essay includes the rich details that he has provided for making tea, which is otherwise considered a very simple and regular process. Then, to prevent it from becoming a mundane subject, he

made use of humour to add charm to the topic. This is a hallmark of Orwell's brilliance as a writer. The simplicity and clarity in the language made it very straightforward and easy to understand for people from all cultural backgrounds, thus making it a joy to follow along. Also, he highlighted the culture and how tea can present national identity and comfort during difficult times.

Despite its strengths, there are some criticisms that can also be followed. The first is that some aspects of his essay are very opinionated and subjective. For example, his stance on not adding sugar and the flavour concentration (tea should be strong). By considering only his culture, he has generalised his opinions. For example, "*All true tea lovers not only like their tea strong, but like it a little stronger with each year that passes.*" This points towards his narrow cultural focus, ignoring the diversity of tea around other cultures. Some repetitions are also found in his essay. For example, he points out not to use sugar again and again and also to pour milk after the tea.

Conclusion

To conclude, "A Nice Cup of Tea" is a very enjoyable piece of work highlighting the love of tea for Orwell. His details about the process of making tea are such that it makes a mundane topic like this very charming. It symbolises the joy we receive from the little things in life. It is the perfect representation of the saying, "*Little things are not little.*" Little things like making tea can bring joy and be a source of survival during difficult times. Although some of his views were narrow and lacked subjectivity, the essay succeeded in being an enduring classic in literature and cultural circles for its charm, wit and detailed reflection on a quintessentially British ritual.

References

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