

**ANALYSIS OF THE POEM “TO DEPEND ON YOURSELF — A LUCKY CHANCE” BY
ALEKSANDR FAYNBERG**

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INTRODUCTION

Aleksandr Faynberg is a well-known poet and translator whose works are respected in Uzbekistan and beyond. His poetry often focuses on human dignity, freedom, and moral values. Many of his poems encourage readers to think deeply about life and about their role in society.

One of his meaningful poems is “To Depend on Yourself — a Lucky Chance.” In this poem, the poet reflects on the importance of independence and warns about the dangers of depending too much on other people. The poem is philosophical and thoughtful, and it shows how difficult it can be for a person to find their place in a world divided by power and submission.

The Poem

To depend on yourself — a lucky chance,
God forbid you bow to another’s stance.
From gates you’ll get a turning blow,
Or punches in the face with no clear foe.
To depend on slaves is no relief,
They poison bread with secret grief.
They trample gardens out of spite,
Or burn your home within the night.
Now tell me, where have you arrived?
Left’s a slave, right’s the lord contrived,
And in the middle, rowan by the fence,
A quiet place without pretense.
Where will you plant your stake so true?
You’re neither slave nor master too.
There lies the root of lonely pain,
My brother, lost between the chains.

Summary of the Poem. The poem begins with the idea that depending on yourself is a great fortune. The poet writes: “To depend on yourself — a lucky chance, / God forbid you bow to another’s stance.” These lines show the poet’s belief that independence is very important for a person’s dignity.

The poet then explains that depending on other people may lead to disappointment or humiliation. The lines “From gates you’ll get a turning blow, / Or punches in the face with no clear foe” describe how people may reject or mistreat someone who relies too much on others.

Later in the poem, the poet talks about slaves and explains that depending on them is also dangerous. The lines “They poison bread with secret grief” suggest hidden anger and betrayal. The poet also mentions trampled gardens and burned homes, which symbolize destruction caused by resentment and injustice.

In the next part of the poem, the speaker asks an important question: where does a person belong in such a world? On one side there are slaves, and on the other side there are lords or masters. This shows a society divided between people who obey and people who dominate.

Between these two sides, the poet describes “rowan by the fence, / A quiet place without pretense.” This peaceful image contrasts with the violence mentioned earlier and may symbolize a simple and honest life.

At the end of the poem, the poet describes the loneliness of someone who does not belong to either group. The speaker says: “You’re neither slave nor master too. / There lies the root of lonely pain.” These lines express the emotional struggle of a person who chooses independence but feels isolated.

Independence and Self-Reliance. The main theme of the poem is independence. The poet clearly shows that relying on yourself is better than depending on others. According to the poem, a person should protect their dignity and freedom by trusting their own strength.

Power and Social Roles. The poem also explores the roles people play in society. Slaves represent those who obey others without freedom, while lords represent those who control and dominate others. The poet suggests that both roles create problems and conflicts in society.

Loneliness and Moral Strength. Another important theme is loneliness. The speaker is neither a slave nor a master. This position may be difficult because it separates the person from others. However, it also shows moral strength and honesty.

Imagery and Symbolism. Aleksandr Faynberg uses strong imagery to express his ideas. For example, poisoned bread represents hidden betrayal, while burned houses and destroyed gardens show the destructive consequences of anger and resentment.

The rowan tree near the fence is another important symbol. It represents peace, honesty, and independence. This calm image contrasts with the violence described earlier and may symbolize a person who chooses a simple but dignified life.

Conclusion. The poem “To Depend on Yourself — a Lucky Chance” by Aleksandr Faynberg is a deep reflection on independence and human relationships. Through powerful images and thoughtful language, the poet shows the dangers of relying too much on others and the difficulties of living in a society divided by power and submission.

At the same time, the poem encourages readers to value dignity, freedom, and personal responsibility. Even though independence may sometimes lead to loneliness, the poet suggests that it is still the most honest and honorable path for a person to follow.

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