

Sylvia Plath Leaving Cert Poetry Notes

Click on the poem below to bring you to the notes of the poems you have studied.

Table of Contents

Overview of Plath's poetry – Key Points	1
Morning Song	2
Child	3
Poppies in July	4
Black Rook in Rainy Weather	5
The Arrival of the Bee Box	7
Mirror	8
Finisterre	10
Elm.....	11
The Times are Tidy.....	13
Pheasant.	14

Overview of Plath's poetry – Key Points

- 1) Her poetry examines motherhood and her role as a mother.
- 2) Her work looks at the creative process, inspiration and writer's block.
- 3) Her poems examine states of mental breakdown and can be infused with a darkness and menace.
- 4) Her work is deeply personal yet explores universal themes.

Morning Song

Morning Song is a poem about motherhood and the stark, vulnerability associated with parenthood, particularly in the early days of a child's life when they are so fragile. The title 'Morning Song' refers to the child's cries we hear at the end of the poem, and morning also suggests a dawn, a new beginning, in this instance Plath's role as a first time mother. The form of the poem is unrhymed tercets, three line stanzas, and it is filled with aural imagery again lending to the idea that this is a 'song'.

The poem opens with an unusual simile depicting the birth of her child. 'Love set you going like a fat gold watch'. A gold watch is valuable, yes, but the image lacks the softness one would expect when describing the birth of a child. This is what is so appealing about Plath, her unique perspective. She continues this abstract imagery in stanza two comparing the baby to a 'new statue' whose 'nakedness / Shadows our safety'. This metaphor and the accompanying sibilance highlighting the beauty of the baby, it is almost a piece of art to be revered, but also its sheer fragility, which threatens the new parents. Their ineptitude is highlighted by the fact that they stand 'blankly as walls'. Plath subverts the idea prevalent at the time that all women had a natural maternal instinct, instead she is showing the very real uncertainty that becoming a mother can create. And this exploration of motherhood continues into the third stanza, which in a way is the crux of the poem.

I'm no more your mother
Than the cloud that distils a mirror to reflect its own slow
Effacement at the wind's hand

In this image Plath compares herself to a cloud and the child is the rain that has fallen from the cloud and produced a pool of water on the ground, now mirroring the cloud above, as children often reflect their parents. 'Effacement' is a hugely significant word in the poem, often overlooked by students. It has three meanings, the process of eliminating something, to reduce in significance and also it is the thinning of the cervix in labour. When a woman has a child the impact of motherhood can be the loss of the woman's sense of who she was before the child, and her needs can also become secondary to the needs to the child. Plath sees the realities of motherhood as a diminishment of herself, this is a radically feminist view of motherhood for the 1950's.

This change is depicted later in the poem when she describes herself as 'cow-heavy' with breast milk in her unflattering 'Victorian nightgown'. The loss of self is mitigated somewhat in the final stanza when the child's cry 'clear vowels rise like balloons', this cry is in sharp contrast with the 'bald cry' from the opening stanza and there is a more

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uplifting tone here. However, critics often cite 'Morning Song' as a celebratory poem, but I wonder is it more a *mourning*, as in grieving, song, lamenting the mother's lost identity with the birth of her child?

Overview:

- **Themes: motherhood, the vulnerability of becoming a mother and the loss of self.**
- **Key images: the watch, the new statue, the cloud and the puddle, cow heavy and Victorian nightgown, the baby's cries.**
- **Stylistic features: sounds permeate the poem, assonance, alliteration**
- **Tone: reflective, disorientation, uplifting.**

Child

'Child' is a fantastic poem to link with 'Morning Song'. Top tip is to remember 30% of your grade is for cohesion so it is worthwhile making links between poems. 'Child' is a short, simple poem, again in unrhymed tercets. Plath's adoration for her son shines through from the opening stanza 'Your clear eye is the one absolutely beautiful thing'. This joyous, self-assured tone is followed by all of her hopes and dreams as a mother and what she wants to do for him;

I want to fill it with colour and ducks
The zoo of the new

These images capture optimism of young motherhood, the lovely nursery rhyming sound of 'zoo of the new', illustrates how the ordinary things in life are fascinating when seen afresh through a child's eyes. Enjambment takes us to the next stanza when two metaphors mark the shift in tone. Here she compares her child to an 'April snowdrop', delicate and innocent, and then herself to an 'Indian pipe', a flower that takes feeds off other plants. This disturbing image shows how she fears she will 'feed off' or damage her child.

The image of the 'pool' seen in 'Morning Song' is found again here, the eye is compared to a pool in 'which images should be grand and classical'. Here the word 'should' is very telling; Plath is again worrying about her abilities as a mother.

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The final stanza is filled with despair, as a poem that began so optimistically, descends into guilt. The child's eye, which has been the focus of the poem, in reality sees only his mother's anxious hands above him 'this troublous /wringing of hands'.

The final line of the poem is made all the more poignant by the fact that less than two weeks later, Plath committed suicide. Her image of her son having no guiding light, 'this dark / Ceiling without a star', foreshadows this awful reality. Even more tragically her son would later go on to commit suicide also.

Overview:

- **Themes: the ideals juxtaposed with the realities of motherhood**
- **Key images: the child's eye is central, all other images stem from it, zoo of the new, the two flowers, the anxious hands, the dark ceiling.**
- **Stylistic features: simple almost like a nurse's rhyme, enjambment signifies being carried away by emotion.**
- **Tone: hopeful, turns anxious and eventually into despair**

Poppies in July

'Poppies in July' is a remarkable poem. It is a poem about a mental breakdown, a mind in turmoil, seeking relief. This turmoil is captured stylistically by the sometimes awkward syntax; the desperate rhetorical questions; the exclamation marks and dashes; and the repetition. Plath's marriage was breaking up and the poem really captures the idea that a person in psychological pain can crave, physical pain or alternatively numbness to alleviate their psychological pain. 'If I could bleed, or sleep!-'. One of the most cryptic lines of the poem 'If my mouth could marry a hurt like that!' suggests the root cause of all this anguish is indeed her marriage and the pain it has brought her.

The speaker in the poem addresses the poppies throughout the poem. She opens the poem by comparing them to fire, 'little hell flames' and then asks 'Do you do no harm?'.

The second stanza is has short, staccato, contradictory sentences.

You flicker. I cannot touch you.
I put my hands among the flames. Nothing burns.

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She cannot touch them yet she puts her hands on them, she touches flames but they don't burn her; there is a sensory confusion here that illustrates her confused mental state 'it exhausts me' the speaker exclaims.

The imagery moves from away from flames to blood, first comparing the papery texture of the poppies' petals, to the bleeding lips of a mouth 'clear red, like the skin of a mouth. A mouth just bloodied'. And then to 'Little bloody skirts' with connotations of femininity and menstruation here.

The poppies then become the source of something more valuable to the speaker, their seeds which contain opium is an another possible avenue to alleviate her suffering; 'Where are your opiates your nauseous capsules?'

She craves the 'dulling and stilling' of the drug but ultimately this is all wishful thinking and the poem ends with the repetition of 'But colorless. Colourless.' The overall tone is one of deep suffering and despair and these final lines offer the speaker no respite, evoking sympathy in the reader. The finality of the two full stops adds to the depressive nature of the stanza.

Overview:

- **Themes: mental breakdown or turmoil, desire to self-harm and self-medicate.**
- **Key images: the poppies are central – poppies as fire, as bloody skirts, as the bloody lips of a mouth, the opiates, the glass capsule, colorless.**
- **Stylistic features: awkward syntax; desperate rhetorical questions; punctuation such as exclamation marks and dashes; and repetition.**
- **Tone: suffering and despair.**

Black Rook in Rainy Weather

This poem touches on a topic which is explored by many poets, that of poetic inspiration itself. Watching a black rook rearrange it's feathers in the rain prompted Plath to write the poem and stave off a period of writer's block. She discusses poetic inspiration as a sort of divine inspiration, a miracle that one must wait for, and without which, life is bleak and depressing. There is a strong interplay in the poem between light and darkness, the light represents inspiration and the darkness, the depression she feels without it. Another motif running through the poem is that of religious symbolism, she uses language such as 'miracles', 'ceremony', 'celestial', and 'angel' thus linking poetry to the divine. The form of the poem is eight, unrhymed, quintains.

The opening stanza introduces the black rook of the title, the unlikely source of inspiration for the poet. Yet the action of the rook ‘arranging and rearranging its feathers’ is a metaphorical nod to the construction of a poem, the editing involved in the creative process. Plath claims she does ‘not expect a miracle / or an accident / to set the sight on fire’ and here she is acknowledging two contrasting paths towards poetic inspiration, the divine and the accidental.

A central theme of the poem is explored in stanzas 3 – 5, the idea that the most ordinary and everyday objects are deserving of inclusion in poetry when looked at through the artist’s eyes;

As if a celestial burning took
Possession of the most obtuse objects now and then –

...bestowing largesse, honour,
One might say love.

Throughout the poem there is an apocalyptic feel at times; the imagery of the ‘desultory weather’, the ‘mute sky’ the ‘dull ruinous landscape’ and the ‘season of fatigue’ all work to evoke the depressive state of the speaker whose biggest fear is that of ‘total neutrality’ a feeling of nothingness. This image is terrifically evocative as depression is often characterised not by a feeling of sadness but by a numbness, not feeling anything at all.

The speaker knows she must be patient, reinforced by the repetition of ‘wait’ in the final stanza but the waiting is worth it seen also with the repetition of ‘miracles’ in this stanza too. She personifies the act of creation as ‘the angel’ whose ‘descent’ is ‘rare and random’.

The language in this poem is particularly beautiful, ‘spasmodic tricks of radiance’, being a personal favourite line, but the beauty of the language almost belies the message of the poem. Perhaps writing poetry is more a honed skill than random, divine inspiration bestowed upon the writer; is Plath selling herself short here?

Overview:

- **Themes:** poetic inspiration, writer’s block, the worthiness of the ordinary in poetry
- **Key images:** the rook rearranging the feathers, light and darkness, divine imagery
- **Stylistic features:** repetition of ‘wait’, ‘miracles’ and ‘angel’

- **Tone: an interplay between, depressed and hopeful.**

The Arrival of the Bee Box

The bee box is a metaphor for the speaker's mind, her thoughts are at times chaotic, unintelligible and even 'dangerous'. Throughout the poem there is a power struggle and a tension exists about who is control, the speaker or her inner voices. The box is a place of confinement and claustrophobia but also a source of deep curiosity. It is almost a metaphorical Pandora's box, urging the speaker to release her thoughts. The poem is also about creativity, and the bravery and vulnerability required to access our inner thoughts and feelings and subsequently release them, through art, into the world. Similar to 'Black Rook in Rainy Weather' the poem is in quintains, seven stanzas, with a final single line.

The poem opens with the assertion that the 'bee box' was something she 'ordered'. She assumes responsibility for it, at the same time as being slightly fearful of it. She uses an odd and quirky metaphor to describe the box; 'the coffin of a midget or a square baby' and this unsettling images foreshadows the unsettling tone of the poem throughout. This unsettling feeling is evoked in part due to the focus on noise throughout the poem and the onomatopoeia; there is a 'din', 'angrily clambering', 'unintelligible syllables', 'Roman mob', 'furious Latin'. At one point she says 'It is the noise that appals me most of all'.

Some other key imagery in the poem is her image of the bees as the inside of the box as 'dark, dark / with the swarmy feeling of African hands'. This image cannot but evoke connotations of the slave trade and is therefore, deeply disturbing. She also compares the bees to a 'Roman mob' in the fourth stanza, evoking chaos. But a tentative sense of order returns to the poem as Plath begins to take back control over her thoughts.

They can die, I need feed them nothing, I am the owner

The images that follow, of her as 'tree' or in the beekeeping costume 'moon suit and funeral veil' are much more passive and relaxed, the tone has shifted and the speaker has resolved that 'I will be sweet God, I will set them free.'

When a single line in a poem stands apart from the other stanzas you must analyse it, this is a top tip for the unseen poem also. The final line of 'The Arrival of the Bee Box' that 'The box is only temporary.' is a reluctant assertion that Plath must release her

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feelings and thoughts, she must order her internal chaos perhaps through the medium of poetry.

Finally, the repetition of the pronoun 'I', coupled with the fact that Plath's father had a keen interest in bees as did she, make this poem an extremely personal poem.

Remember, a top tip is that questions on Plath often centre on this dichotomy; the personal nature of her poems and, at the same time, their universality.

Overview;

- **Themes: exploration of inner thoughts and who has control over them, the creative process.**
- **Key images: the bee box, the coffin of a midget, the African hands, the Roman mob, the tree, the beekeepers costume, the speaker as a god.**
- **Stylistic features: noise, both discussed in the poem and the onomatopoeia. Repetition of the pronoun 'I'. Rhetorical questions.**
- **Tone: unsettling, fearful, curious, acceptance.**

Mirror

'Mirror' is a poem in which Plath uses the voice of a persona. Interestingly she chooses to personify a mirror and through the mirror she explores themes such as a woman's self-worth and how it can often be linked to their appearance. The poem exposes how the aging process can be overwhelming, when so much value is placed on looks. The poem is in two 9 line stanzas, in the first stanza the mirror is hung on a wall, with faces passing, interrupting its view of the speckled wallpaper. In the second the mirror is compared to a 'lake' and now appears to be flat on a dresser where the same woman looks over into it every morning.

The opening line of the poem is interesting and this is where close examination of single words is key to proving your abilities to analyse a poem to a H1 standard. The mirror claims 'I am silver and exact'. The most obvious meaning of 'exact' is precise, but it can also be used as a verb, and to exact something from someone is to obtain something. Finally if something or someone is 'exacting' they make great demands on your attention or your resources. All three meanings of the word apply to the mirror. It is precise, it takes away the woman's self-worth and it commands her attention. Remember poetry is such a paired back form of language, each word is thoughtfully chosen by the poet!

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The mirror's very neutral opening claim 'I have no preconceptions' is followed by the more sinister assertion that, 'Whatever I see I swallow immediately', the very act of looking in the mirror seems to diminish the self as the mirror ingests it. In the same stanza the canny metaphor of 'The eye of a little god' shows us the importance of the mirror, it is deified due the power it wields over her.

The second stanza continues to build on the subtle sinister tone in the first. Although the poem was written in 1961, its relevance today is remarkable. The woman is

Searching her reaches for what she really is
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon

The woman is looking for her value in her reflection and unhappy with the reality she turns to the flattering lighting of candles or moonlight. In an age where the image reigns supreme on social media, and filtering and editing images is ubiquitous, this poem is immediately relatable. Including a personal comment like this is important to secure a H1.

Sadly the woman is never satisfied and we see the 'agitation of hands' that we saw earlier in 'Child'.

The final frightening image:

In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish

A young girl dies in the lake and old woman is resurrected to take her place, this emphasises the terror engendered in our society around the aging process, particularly for women. The repugnant simile comparing the woman to 'a terrible fish' is brutal, Plath is unforgiving both to her aging self and the society that appears to revile it.

Overview;

- **Themes: a woman's self-worth and value in society is often in her appearance, internalised misogyny towards the aging process.**
- **Key images: the personification of the mirror, eye of a little god, lake, the candles and the moon, the agitation of hands, the young girls drowning the old woman and the simile of the terrible fish.**
- **Stylistic features: the voice of the mirror, not the woman.**
- **Tone: neutral to begin but increasingly menacing.**

Finisterre

The poem is inspired by a trip to the titular French town, 'Finisterre', which translated means 'end of the land'. The poem has four 9 line stanzas and is extremely rich linguistically as well as sensuously. Plath had a deep affiliation to the sea which emerges in this poem and the wildness of the sea reflects her inner turmoil and anguish.

Stanza one depicts the jutting cliffs and alludes to the many lives lost in the treacherous sea, she also describes the veterans who are housed in the town, so the overwhelming feeling of this stanza is of damaged and lost lives. This stanza is full of aural imagery. In the second stanza Plath is walking along the clifftop surrounded by mist, this is a very tactile stanza. The third describes a statue in the town 'Our Lady of the Shipwrecked' and the sailor kneeling at her feet, this is a visual stanza. The final stanza talks about the sellers who man the tourist stalls in the town and the voice of one of the sellers has an ambiguous final message, again the auditory sense is strongest here.

The image of the cliffs as wizened, arthritic knuckles clinging to the nothingness of the sea opens the poem;

the last fingers, knuckled and rheumatic
Cramped on nothing

The 'exploding' sea which 'cannons into their ear' is likened to the 'faces of the drowned'. The pathetic image of the 'Leftover soldiers from old, messy wars' adds to the language of conflict we see throughout this stanza, it is a stark and brutal opening.

Stanza two takes on an equally chilling, but more mystical edge, as she takes a walk along the cliff top. The mists are compared to souls in an extremely vivid image

The mists are part of the ancient paraphernalia-
Souls, rolled in the doom noise of the sea.
They bruise the rocks out of existence, then resurrect them.
They go up without hope, like sighs.

There is a lot of religious imagery in these lines, the idea that the souls are resurrected but where they go seems to be a place of hopelessness, rather than salvation, creates a gloomy tone mirrored by the assonance in the stanza. As the souls pass her she becomes suffocated by them, Plath was haunted by the early death of her father and

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we see this captured in the claustrophobic imagery here; ‘they stuff my mouth with cotton’.

The religious iconography continues into stanza three, where a strange mirroring occurs;

A peasant woman in black
Is praying to the monument of the sailor praying

The statue of Our Lady of the Shipwreck is oblivious to the prayers of both as she is ‘in love with the beautiful formlessness of the sea’.

The final stanza turns now from the natural and the supernatural, to the human endeavours of the ‘postcard stalls’ where shell ‘necklaces’ and ‘pretty trinkets’ from the sea are sold. A voice tells us ironically that

They do not come from the Bay of the Dead down there,
But from another place, tropical and blue

Is this line telling us that not everything is as it seems? The final line offers us nothing more than further ambiguity; ‘These are our crepes. Eat them before they blow cold.’ The I of the poem is finally offered some sustenance, some comfort and also a warning to enjoy the moment before it again goes ‘cold’. A insight into Plath’s volatile psyche perhaps?

Overview:

- **Themes: inner turmoil.**
- **Key images: personification of the sea, the cliffs, Our Lady of the Shipwrecked and the sailor, the peasant praying to them.**
- **Stylistic features: sensuous poem – hearing, touch and sight. Religious iconography The voice of the trinket seller.**
- **Tone: Dark, mournful, ambiguous.**

Elm

‘Elm’ is yet another poem where Plath adopts a persona, as in ‘Mirror’, but it has the undercurrent of horror that we see in ‘Poppies in July’. She takes on the persona of the Elm tree who is speaking to the poet, although in the final stanzas the voice of the ‘I’ becomes more ambiguous and unclear.

‘Elm’ can be overwhelming for students to condense in the exam because there are 14 tercets. To help, here is an overview of the key images from all the stanzas;

- Stanza 1: the tree speaking
- Stanza 2: the sound of the sea
- Stanza 3 and 4: love compared to a horse
- Stanza 5: the rain
- Stanza 6: the sunset
- Stanza 7: the wind
- Stanza 8 and 9: the moon
- Stanza 10 and 11: the bird in the tree
- Stanza 12: the clouds
- Stanza 13 and 14: the face in the branches

We will dissect some of these images in more detail but as always let’s look at the themes of the poem. The poem is about a state of anxiety and fear ‘I know the bottom...it is what you fear’. There is a malevolent presence in the poem which turns the elements of nature into painful and destructive forces. The poem can be read as exploration of Plath’s ongoing mental struggles and their impact on her.

The tree seems to recognise Plath’s or the listener’s anguish, saying she too has been to the bottom ‘I do not fear it: I have been there’. In the second stanza this ‘bottom’ is further interrogated. The tree asks if the noise of her rustling branches reminds Plath of the ‘sea...or the voice of nothing, that was your madness?’ Part of this madness could be attributed to the impact of her which is referred to in the following stanza ‘Love is a shadow’. Plath uses the simile ‘it has gone off, like a horse’ to show how love has deserted her.

The elements of nature transmogrified throughout the rain is the ‘sound of poisons’, ‘like arsenic’; the setting sun is referred to as an ‘atrocious’; the moon ‘scathes’ her. The language here is violent and suggests physical pain. One image in particular is reminiscent of the electroshock therapy she previously underwent during a period of mental illness;

Scorched to the root
My red filaments burn and stand, a hand of wires

In stanza’s 11 and 12, Plath uses synecdoche (this is a technique where a part is used to represent the whole, for example, the crown can be used to represent the king). Plath uses ‘a cry’, ‘flaps out’, ‘hooks’, ‘feathery’, to suggest a bird without directly using

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the word bird. The bird is a bird of prey, searching for love, but it is a dark and malignant force.

Repetition is also an extremely important sound technique used in the poem and you should definitely include it in your response. Repetition is always used for emphasis and here it is used to emphasise her despair; her desperate thoughts ‘echoing, echoing’; ‘I let her go. I let her go’. In particular you should focus on the repetitions in the final lines;

It petrifies the will. These are the isolate, slow faults
That kill, that kill, that kill

This final image shows the poet frozen, inactive and in a state of self-destruction, all adding to the disturbing and unsettling tone of the poem.

Overview:

- **Themes: exploring anxiety and fear and mental illness**
- **Key images:**
- **Stylistic features: rhetorical questions, repetition, the language of physical pain, synecdoche.**
- **Tone: malevolent, chilling, disturbing.**

The Times are Tidy

‘The Times are Tidy’ is unlike the other poems on the course, in that it is a cutting social commentary and there is no personal pronoun ‘I’. As the title suggests, Plath sees the 1950’s as a neat and orderly time in history, but this is not perceived as good thing and instead she is critical of society, in contrast with times gone by. Three images dominant the poem in the first stanza are the hero and cook, who have been replaced by the mayor and a rotisserie. The second stanza is the knight or dragon slayer, whose heroic deeds are no longer necessary, the dragon has shrivelled to lizard like proportions due to lack of action. And finally, the third stanza laments that all the witches have long ago been burnt at the stake.

It is a common trope in literature, to be critical of the present and romanticise the past and that’s exactly what Plath is doing in her opening image as she laments;

Unlucky the hero born
In the province of the of the stuck record

She equates modernity and its technological advancements, such as the record player, with the idea that we have stagnated. The image of the 'mayor's rotisserie/turns round of its accord' means the cook is now 'jobless'. Is this not still a prevalent anxiety, that technology is replacing humans?

This continues with the imagery in the second stanza; 'There's no career in the venture /of riding against the lizard', the knight is defunct as the lizard is 'Himself withered these latter days / To leaf – size from lack of action'. The soft alliteration of 'l' here, lends this stanza a lovely softness which contrasts with her biting commentary.

But the most interesting line in the second stanza is; 'History's beaten the hazard'. The despondent tone here is paradoxical, surely Plath should be rejoicing if she were living in an age where danger and threat had been erased? Why does she bemoans the relative safety of her modern world, the subtlety lies in her final image and here the poem takes on a feminist edge. Plath says that 'The last crone got burnt up/ more than eight decades back' referring to the archaic practice of burning witches at the stake, widely regarded as a way of legitimising the execution of 'troublesome' women. She is mourning the loss of difficult women, as she extols sarcastically that 'the children are better for it'. There is more to this poem than meets the eye.

Overview:

- **Themes: a social commentary, critical of modern life and romanticising magical elements from the past. Loss of the 'crone'.**
- **Key images: the hero juxtaposed with the mayor, modern life like a stuck record, the cook juxtaposed with the rotisserie, the knight and the dragon lizard, the crone.**
- **Stylistic features: juxtaposition, paradoxical, assonance.**
- **Tone: harsh, critical, nostalgic and mournful for the past.**

Pheasant.

'Pheasant' is outwardly, a straightforward nature poem; Plath admires a pheasant she has seen on the grounds of her house 'that odd, dark head, pacing'. But like many of her poems there is a disconcerting undertone to it created by the sibilant 'It startles me still'.

The poem opens with a conversational quality as she addresses a 'You' in the first line 'You said you would kill it in the morning / Do not kill it', this is both accusatory and

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confrontational and we know her husband Ted Hughes enjoyed hunting. This reflection on the pheasant alludes to various hidden subtexts such as this, the tension between husband and wife. Another such subtext is the supernatural which we see in the second stanza and third stanza when she refers to being ‘visited’ by the pheasant. However, she is quick to dismiss the connotations of the word she has just used.

I am not mystical: it isn't
As if I thought it had a spirit.
It is simply in its element.

We see this playfulness continue when she acknowledges its ‘kingliness’ in his natural habitat, using regal language to suggest his world is ‘court’.

The wonder at the ‘rareness’ of the bird, emphasised with the repetition prompts Plath’s imagination to run away, she pictures ‘a hundred on that hill...a fine thing!’, the exclamation mark illustrating her awe at the beauty of it. She describes it as a ‘cornucopia’, a symbol of plenty and indeed the presence of the pheasant fills her with artistic inspiration.

While the pheasant ‘Settles in the elm and is easy’ she closes the poem with ‘Let be, let be’ - an admonishment to herself for disturbing the pheasant and perhaps also to the persona who said they would kill it. The ease of the pheasant is contrasted with Plath’s sense of having intruded.

Overview:

- **Themes:** reflection on the beauty of nature and how human being interact with nature (desire to kill, be inspired).
- **Key images:** the pheasant, ‘mystical’, regal language; kingliness, court, cornucopia.
- **Stylistic features:** conversational tone, repetition ‘rare’/ ‘rareness’, ‘kill’, ‘Let be’, sibilance.
- **Tone:** reflective, wonder, admonishment.