

Poem analysis: lying in a hammock

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Analysis This poem is really cool. I like it a lot. From the title all the way until the second to last line of the poem, one may think that this piece is a simplistically vivid description of a man and his farm. With such beautiful imagery, the reader anticipates an enjoyable conclusion; however, they are treated to a harsh wake-up call in the last line.

I needed to read this poem multiple times before I could fully interpret it.

Although they just seem like just beautiful descriptions, every line in this poem contains hidden negative symbolism about the speaker's life. The first line contains an image of a "bronze butterfly" sleeping on a trunk. This stagnant description of such a beautiful creature demonstrates a slowly moving life, one of which hasn't achieved much. The trunk that the butterfly is sleeping on is colored black, representing the man's missed opportunities to leave the farm.

The next line portrays a leaf blowing down a ravine found behind an empty house.

Obviously the empty house and the later heard cowbells in the distance (implying that the cows are leaving the farm) are clear images of the man's loneliness. The speaker moves on to spot some horse manure. This dung, after being left for over a year, has dried and is turning into stones. The changing of this manure symbolizes the man's changing into an old, lifeless man.

Just as the manure does, the longer the man sits there and waits for something, the more prone he is to dry up and waste his life.

Before the last line of the poem, the speaker mentions the setting sun and the evening that approaches as he lays back in his hammock. A chicken hawk, a well-known hunter, flies by the man and looks for his home, just as the man is looking for his home " or the place where he belongs. As the evening envelops the man, all of these apparently " beautiful" images (yet symbolically depressing messages) pushes the man to realize that his life has become stagnant, monotonous, and worthless. He has missed so much in his life and, now as the sun sets around him, the sun of his life sets as well.