

Beauty

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



The poem “ Beauty” by the author Tony Hoagland is a piece about the true beauty of a woman. Not the outside physical features but what makes a girl a girl and a woman a woman. True inner beauty, the special flower that girls hold so dear. Hoagland uses extended metaphor, third person point of view, and imagery to portray the loss of a woman’s virginity by comparing it to the strive to be beautiful to gain the acceptance of society. A woman’s virginity is her most prized possession, something that, once lost, cannot be gained back.

An object that is a woman’s self respect, self-righteousness, and love for ones self all in one. When Hoagland says, “ Or how she spent the next decade of her life/ auditioning tall men” (Hoagland line 28-29) he lets the reader pause and think about the time span of a decade, the length of time that she spent being with different men trying to make her self feel pretty. Illustrating that in order to feel good about her self the woman needed to be with a man and have him by her side at all times.

With out this she would not feel pretty. Towards the end of the poem Hoagland says, “ My sister just stood still for thirty seconds,/ amazed by what was happening,/ then shrugged and tossed her shaggy head/ as if she was throwing something out,/ something she had carried a long ways,/ but had no use for anymore” (47-52). This quote shows that after going through all of those men and not knowing what real beauty is she realized that she had thrown away the one thing that makes a woman truly beautiful.

When the woman “ shrugged and tossed her shaggy head” it shows that her new lifestyle had made her accept what had happened instead of being

upset of the life she had chosen for her self. The entire poem is an extended metaphor for the beauty of a woman portrayed through virginity shown through an appropriate point of view. The third person point of view allows the reader to be able to see the woman through an outsider's point of view; this allows the reader to see what society sees and not what the woman sees directly within her self.

When Hoagland describes “ After all those years/ of watching her reflection in the mirror,/ sucking in her stomach and standing straight,/ she said it was relief,/ being done with beauty,” (6-10). The sister describes what she saw of her sister through out the years. Starting with her change in physical appearance and the lengths that she would go to to make her self feel beautiful, then her sister morphing into the “ dumb blonde” character and finally, fully changing and losing her real inner beauty all because she thought it would make her more physically attractive.

Society has portrayed skinny, blonde, and willingness for boys to be considered “ beauty”, but this is not necessarily the case. Inner beauty is what should be considered beautiful. A exceptional personality can be immensely more beautiful then anything shown on the outside. Outer beauty can be morphed and changed with things such as makeup, hair products, tanning agents, eating habits, and clothing style while inner beauty on the other hand is something that someone is born with. All natural and potentially breath taking, this is why virginity is important.

Hoagland also includes the use of imagery to portray the way society makes girls feel they need to change and morph to become more attractive.

Hoagland describes the moment the girl really started to change her self, “ I’m probably the only one in the whole world/ who actually remembers the year in high school/ she perfected the art/ of being a dumb blonde,” (17-20). Writing about the “ dumb blonde” Hoagland demonstrates what girls in todays society believe to be pretty or what boys will find attractive.

Acting stupid, something that in reality is not that attractive, girls are lead to believe will help them. Changing oneself on the outside is what society has made girls believe to be beautiful. Through metaphors, third person point of view, as well as imagery, Hoagland shows that it is not on the outside that is truly beautiful but what lies within. The inner beauty is what matter most and most importantly to a girl is virginity. Virginity, a sign of a woman’s true beauty and something that should not be given away to strive for societies acceptance.