

Mother, any distance essay



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Simon Armitage, author of 'Mother any distance' has written a poem on the pain of moving home and suffering of leaving your parents, from a child's point of view. This is similar to the poem, 'On my first Sonne' written by Ben Jonson where his child has already left him as the child has sadly passed away.

'The Song of the Old Mother' by William Butler Yeats and 'Before You Were Mine' by Carol Ann Duffy are poems that also show relationships between mothers and their children. 'Mother any distance' shows the bond between the child and mother by describing it as a "spool of tape". In line 8 when it says, "Anchor" and "Kite", we can interpret this as the child being the kite that is trying to fly away, whereas the mother is the anchor that is trying to pull the child back and is symbolising the roots of the child's origin. I feel sympathetic towards the mother here, as she has to part with her son even though she doesn't want to.

I also feel sympathy towards the mother in 'The Song of the Old Mother' as she is doing all of the house chores like it says on the line 3, "And then I must scrub and bake and sweep". The author has placed all three of these adverbs to create a list of things she does. This emphasises how much she works and how hard she works. My sympathy increases for the mother when later she says that "the young lie long and dream in their bed" showing how the children are spoilt and have no feelings for their mother. Whereas in 'The Song of the Old Mother' the poem is about a mother who is complaining about her children, 'On my first Sonne' is a poem about a father remembering the good times he had with his son.

The father shows love for his son when he describes him as “ his best piece of poetry”. In this poem we can be sure that Ben Jonson is speaking for and as himself as it says his name in line 10. Therefore as Jonson is a poet, this quotation shows us that his son was the best thing that has happened to him. We consider poems as beautiful and creative pieces of writings, and so when Jonson describes his son as a poem, we see his son as a sweet and adorable child. Whilst reading this poem we can feel the father's sorrow because his child, that was so dear to him, has passed away.

In the last line, “ As what he loves may never like so much”, the poet is trying to tell us that never love someone so much because when you part from them, you will achieve no more than grief and misery. We also pity the son as we see him, as a humble and innocent child that had no control of when he was going to die as a result only was able to live “ Seven years” of his life. This is different from the children in ‘ The Song of the Old Mother’ as we do not pity the children but instead consider them spoiled. However we do sympathize with the mother as she nears death. As the boy in ‘ On my first Sonnet’, the mother in this poem does not have any control of when she will die.

The poet has emphasized this in the last two lines, “ while I must work because I am old, And the seed of the fire gets feeble and cold. ” We can interpret this as the old woman is becoming feeble and is cold in the sense she feels death and knows that she is near the end of her life. The poet of ‘ Mother any distance’ creates a visual effect of measuring all of the years that have gone by between them. This is created when it says on line 6 and 7, “ the line still feeding out, unreeling years between us.

” The child is so dependant on his mother that he needs help on everything that is “ any distance greater than a single span”. This shows that the child also loves his mother and is reluctant to leave. This is later confirmed in the last line when the child doubts if he should leave or not. This is shown when it says, “ I reach towards a hatch that opens on an endless sky to fall or fly.

The mother’s “ fingertips still pinch” the measuring tape showing that the mother has come to help the child measure things but now may be reluctant at last to let go. The poet in line 9 uses the word “ space-walk” to emphasise the empty space between the mother and child. The “ last one hundredth of an inch” marks the limit of the tape measure showing us that beyond this mark the child has to let go or the tape will break. This shows us that being and undergoing independence has a chance of failing and thriving. I find this poem emotional as there is such a strong bond between the mother and child but there is a time when the child has to leave their parents, and I think that this is illustrated beautifully in this poem. The love and care between a mother and her child is also shown in the poem “ Before You Were Mine”.

This is shown when the mother no longer goes out dancing with her friends once her child is born. This shows that the mother is so responsible and cares for her child. This is similar to the mother in “ The Song of the Old Mother” as the mother there looks after the home and acts as a ‘ traditional’ mother. This is also similar to the mother in ‘ Mother any distance’ because the mother there looks out and helps her son out when he needs her. I find that the best parents are the father from ‘ On my first Sonne’ and the mother from ‘ Mother any distance’.

This is because the father really loves his son and remembers all the happy memories that had with his son. I like the mother because she helps her son throughout each step of his life and even though it is tough for her to leave her son she knows that it is for her son's happiness. I think that these are the two ideal parents.