

"morning song" and "sonnet 19"



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The poem "Morning Song" was written by the poet Sylvia Plath. Based around the struggles of this young mother the poem shows not only the events that took place within her first few weeks of motherhood but the feelings and emotions she goes through. Through her life this poet suffered times of depression in which finally lead her to commit suicide in February 11th 1963 by the means of suffocation with cooking gas.

Although this poem was written a few years before then she was still going through a stage of post-novel depression. Due to this, the poem has a sad and depressing atmosphere, which is shown best in paragraph three. The first few paragraphs are based around the arrival of her baby while as the last few on an event that happened a few weeks later. We can say that the event in the last paragraphs happened a few weeks later because at first it is written in the past tense and then in the present.

Also in the second line Sylvia Plath describes the cries of her baby as ' bald' meaning an unpractised one-note cry. However in the second to last lines she describes it as a ' handful of notes' meaning the baby has developed and practised so time must have past. The title morning song gives us our first clue into what this poem is based on. The word ' Morning' could describe the beginning of the baby's life and her new life as a mother. ' Song' could illustrate the cries in the morning a baby makes or of the lullabies you sing a baby to sleep with.

The beginning of the poem is basically describing the arrival of the child. ' The Midwife slapped your footsoles' in line two is describing the procedure doctors or midwives go through (in this case to start the baby's lung going'.

This is clearly the hour the baby arrived ' among the elements' (in the world). In paragraph two she is writing about the ward, where babies were kept for a few days before returning them to their mother to go home. Wards are usually cold with no double glazing and swinging doors.

The one she was no different being described as ' draughty' like a museum. ' Our voices echo, magnifying your arrival' can illustrate celebrating the newborn baby, making the arrival great. It can also illustrate the repetition. The same things repeated over and over, as the mothers would have to stand around for a long time they would probably talk about the same thing over and over and eventually stop, run out of things to say. ' We stand round blankly as walls' backs this statement. After a while they would get bored, repeat thing over and then stop.

' Your nakedness shadows are safety' represents the way the mother feel looking at their baby, venerable. The Simile:'Love set you going like a Fat Gold Watch', Is at the start of the poem and has many hidden meanings. As well as it being the start of the poem it is also the start of the baby's life. The mother ' set' her baby going like you could a watch as it describes.

As this poem was set in the 60s this line may have been looked at in a different light. Gold watches were expensive and valuable in those days and given at a time of retirement. The owners would have been very protective of them and proud. These watches had no batteries and so in order to work would have to be wound up and cared for each day. If a mother did not care for her baby every day it would die.

Fog watches were popular in the 60s and would often be carried in the top pocket, close to the heart. To keep them safe and close owners had attached cords similar to the bond between a mother and her child and the umbilical cord. These watches like many watches would tick like a baby's heart, softly and quickly. The colours of the watch and the baby can also be thought of as similar. In those times watches were of a pink gold or yellow gold.

Obviously a pink gold is very similar to a baby's and a yellow gold is similar to those born jaundice. The whole of the first paragraph has a rounded theme containing lots of vowels and long, smooth notes. Reasons for this may be of a vowels circular shape. Circles go on forever like the eternal love a mother has for her child.

Easter eggs are round and represent new life. The world is of a circular shape and is also mentioned in this paragraph as the 'elements'. The sound vowels make are smooth and round as well as the movement your mouth makes when pronouncing them. A baby cries, making their mouth round and open (circular).

In the last paragraph vowels are also mentioned and are followed on in this round theme. The simile 'The clear vowels rise like balloons' describing the cries of a baby carries on the theme in which she started in line one. This last paragraph is set in the early hours of the morning. The sun is rising. Slowly it would seem as she describes the effects: 'The window square Whitens and swallows its dull stars'.

As the sun rises the stars dull and the windows brighten with the light. This is an unusual sentence as it runs from the end of the fifth paragraph and into

the last paragraph. Sylvia Plath may have wanted it to flow and make time seem continuous and edging on slowly. It had been a long night as the event she described was none other than her baby's cry in the morning.

The fourth and fifth paragraphs link as they both describe the night before. She had been up most of the night listening to the inevitability of her baby's cry, waiting patiently for it to come. The lines: 'All night your moth-breath flickers among the flat pink roses' Show the protective poet and the way she sees her child as fragile and helpless. This is shown perfectly by the description 'moth-breath'.

Being small, weak and fragile they are easily broken with the smallest of touches. And to follow on she backs it up with the word 'flickers'. Like on a candle, the flame can easily be blown out. We can tell she is listening intently for the cries of her baby with the line: 'A far sea moves in my ear' If you were to get up too quickly or listen very, very carefully you may hear a faint rush of sound. This sound is the rush of blood passing through the veins near the ear.

This sound she describes as a sea, similar to when you put your ear to a seashell (sound echoed in a seashell). When you expect something to come you listen and listen while becoming edgy and preparing to react quickly. This is the same with the poet. 'One cry, and I stumble from bed' She reacts quickly and without hesitation. Having stayed up to listen half the night she would be tired and 'cow-heavy'. When cows go home at night they have eaten all day and are full of milk, bursting.

They return home to be milked. She uses the word 'cow-heavy' to describe how tired and heavy she feels after having had no sleep. The third paragraph is a difficult one to understand and can be interpreted in different ways. One might say that it represents the mother feeling that one day she will have to let her baby go. 'I'm no more your mother' may mean she thinks the baby is independent of himself.

'The cloud that distils a mirror' may represent the baby in a similar form to the mother looking into the mirror. The cloud being the baby and wind being the mum she will one day have let her baby go 'slow effacement at the winds hand' In Conclusion I find the poem "Morning Song" and very touching and loving poem with a unique point of view taken by the poet. I enjoyed interpreting the paragraphs, and finding the hidden meanings. It was a well-expressed poem, and in many ways similar to "Sonnet 19" by William Shakespeare. Both based on love, they also write in their own way about time.

"Morning Song" is based on the beginning of the child's life and the poet's motherhood. "Sonnet 19" is mostly based on the effects of time and aging. Although they can be thought of as similar pieces they have many differences. "Sonnet 19" is for obvious reasons a sonnet, while as "Morning Song" is a poem set as verses crafted to a design that fits the poet, Sylvia Plath.

They were also written at different stages in history and therefore "Sonnet 19" having been written in the 1600s has an archaic language." Sonnet 19" is based on time and the love. Time is an extended metaphor throughout the

poem and in places is personified (we can see by its capital letter). In the first seven lines he is telling time what he is allows time to do.

The first word describing time is ' Devouring', to eat. This adjective is gone back to constantly within these first few lines. As well as having the theme of eating, the first four lines are also mainly contradictions.'Blunt thou Lion's paws'Is a line telling time he can blunt the paws of a lion. This would mean the lion would not be able to hunt and eat to live. He then goes on to say'Make the earth devour her own sweet brood'It is saying time can eat her own creation.

Like when we are buried inside the earth. The third line is basically repeating the first except with a different animal.'Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws'It is effective using assonance, with a double ' ee' on keen and teeth, making it flow and stand out. The last of the animalistic lines is:'Burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood'This is a very effective line. The phoenix is a legendary bird that is born in flames and when it dies is then reborn again in fire.

Since it is said that they live for a very long time the words ' long-lived' is very effective. As well as using alliteration, it joins the two words to make it seem long, like the life of the Phoenix. The next few lines then describe time being quick, as it uses words like ' fleet'st' to describe the seasons and time as ' swift-footed'. He tells time he can do whatever he likes to'The wide world and all her fading sweets'However the poem then has a turning point, telling time what he cannot do.'But I forbid thee one most heinous crime'He is

basically saying time can do all this wrong as said in the first four lines but not this crime.

He then goes on where time is personified, first to be a carpenter: 'O carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow' The he goes on to describe time as an artist 'Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen' Both these lines are saying not to age his love, by giving her wrinkles. He then uses 'Him' with a capital letter, telling us he's describing God. 'Him in they course untainted do allow' - meaning God allows time to do such things. The last two lines are a couplet, in which sum up the poem and give us an understanding of its meaning. 'Yet do they worst old Time: despite they wrong, My love shall in my verse ever live young' This is basically saying that time can do whatever it likes, but 'he' cannot age the love he shows in his verse. In this he is defying time.

In conclusion I find this poem a very expressive and brilliant poem. It truly shows the genius and mind of the one who brought us Romeo and Juliet.