

Mock orange by louise gluck essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Mock Orange by Louise Gluck appears to be about a powerful dislike for sex on the part of the speaker. The author's negative perception and bitterness towards sex sets the tone and introduces other issues. Looking closer at the images reveals the deeper issue to be with being loved by another. Gluck portrays the light of the night, the act of sex, and the lasting disgust after sex, by quickly getting to the point.

The first five lines are about the Mock Orange plant and how the speaker feels about it:

It is not the moon, I tell you. It is these flowers lighting the yard. I hate them. I hate them as I hate sex, (1-5)

"The Mock Orange plant is a sweet enough memory to last all year in the garden. Mock Orange does best in a fertile, well-drain soil". (BHG) The scent of the flowers illuminated the yard as if it was the rays from the moon in a late hour where all you see is the moon in the stars lighting the way. Its essence lingers on.

Gluck moves on slowly to describe each detail of a sexual encounter the speaker despises most:

the man's mouth sealing my mouth, the man's paralyzing body (6-8)

The speaker neither likes kissing nor the controlling 'seal' that is felt while exchanging the affection. She also is disgusted by his 'paralyzing body'. The limp body on top of her, pinning her down, makes her feel trapped and used. The author continues to tell the speaker's story of disdain for sex as she moves forward in lines 9-11. In these lines, the speaker explains the 'cries',

screams, moans, that naturally come during intercourse for both individuals. Moaning, screaming, or yelling, come from the satisfaction but immediately after she feels ashamed or humiliation of being with someone for only moments of pleasure. The speaker does not view sex as a beautiful union between two people, but “ as a way to be controlled, lured by a promise of an answer”. (Emily Stone) Once again, Gluck shows the reader how her speakers disgust for sex, a controlling mechanism. What is the answer that is promised?

In lines 12-20, the speaker hears a question and answer all at once; the question, are we done? The obvious answer is yes. They now part and go their separate ways. It seems no matter how often the speaker engages in sex, she still hears the same questions and answer, there is nothing after the acts accept: “ the scent of mock orange” which “ drifts through the window”. The scent is the very powerful fragrance that comes into the room and covers the shame which then erases the line of the past union.

Finally, Gluck allows you to ponder with the speaker in the last lines:

How can I rest? How can I be consent
When there is still
That odor in the world? (21-24)

After such loveless sex, how can one who was just involved in such an act with another, rest. How is it that anyone can be happy or okay knowing the scent will never leave the world. The scent of the Mock Orange like the scent of sex is a constant in an ever changing world.