

## A Part A - Poetry (The Phantom Horsewoman)

### Structure / Rhyme / Rhythm

The poem is split into four clearly structured stanzas consisting of nine lines each.

Each stanza focuses on a different has a different focus:

- Stanza 1 - focuses on the main male character in 3<sup>rd</sup> person as he goes and stands on a beach.

At this point the reader is unsure what he is looking or 'gazing' at - hint from title. Rhetorical question intrigues reader in last line to keep reading and find out

- Stanza 2 - focuses on a pleasant scene from the past ('back years bring') - picturing himself in a happier time

- Stanza 3 - Expands the focus from the beach to a more extensive scene - man takes the pleasant memory with him wherever he goes.

- stanza 4 - flows in on the main focus of the poem - the girl riding the horse along the beach - takes reader back to main idea he was initially talking about

There is not a strict metre in this poem, however, the first and last lines mostly hint towards an iambic pentameter, whereas the middle lines of each stanza only have around 4 or 5 syllables each. Therefore the metre ~~structure~~ is not strict however the structure is similar in each stanza.

The first, eighth and ninth lines of each stanza rhyme. The second, fourth and sixth rhyme and the third, fifth and seventh rhyme. Therefore there is a strict rhyming scheme which creates a steady rhythm - this makes the poem easy and pleasurable to read.

Every stanza is one long sentence, broken up by commas, semi-colons etc., so each line continues the idea from the previous. This <sup>is</sup> true <sup>for</sup> ~~from~~ every stanza

third and fourth  
except the ~~poem~~ which is separated by a colon  
and there is enjambment of 'A ghost-girl-rider'.  
This is clearly the case to emphasise that this is  
the main focus of the whole poem. It also  
signifies a change in tone from ~~my~~ pleasant  
reflection to dull realisation that the man is no  
longer in the scene he is picturing - he is growing  
old and weaker ('withers').

### Word Choice

'Queer' - strange - tells you that the writer is about to  
follow on by explaining why 'the ways' of men are  
odd.

'Careworn craze' (alliteration of harsh 'c' sound)  
suggest the strange man is even slightly mad or  
delusional

'Sands' and 'seaward' - hints to the reader of the  
location, perhaps a beach as in stanza 3 he then  
explains the scene is at a 'Shore'.

'moreless' / 'stands' / 'gaze' - creates an aura of stillness

the man does not seem to be making any rash

movements - he only watches something. 'Gaze'

perhaps suggests he is looking at something in

admiration or wonder. This is enhanced when

it is repeated in the rhetorical question. The reader

is then intrigued by what he is looking towards.

'sees' / 'gaze' / 'vision' / 'sight' - the writer hints a lot

towards the sense of sight throughout the poem -

this changes in stanza 4 when he makes

reference to 'touch' - using the reader's senses to

portray his emotions.

'sweet soft scene' - (alliteration now contrasts in this

stanza with a delicate 's' sound) - creates a

pleasant atmosphere - shows the ~~reader~~<sup>man</sup> is at ease

in the scene he is looking at.

'Warm, real, and keen' - again writer is using senses

to convey the pleasure of the scene (sweet - taste,

warm - touch, soft - touch).

'instant' - scene is at the forefront of his mind

'phantom' - a ghost - it isn't real or 'instant' -  
contrasting word choice.

'rose bright' - again pleasant word choice -  
bright has connotations of happiness,  
safety.

stanza 4 - change of tone 'withers' - he is  
back to reality - realises he is getting old

'time touches her not' - the girl stays the same  
in his vision as he grows weak and old.

'gaily' - happily - the vision is still pleasant in  
his mind despite depressing nature of his  
position - withering could also hint  
back towards stanza 1 - going mad with  
old age ('craze').

'sings' - music - again using the senses (sound)  
to create pleasant atmosphere - girl rides  
along beach by the tide - it is a happy scene.

## Imagery

'As if on air' (simile) - man sees image of 'phantom horsewoman' in his mind everywhere.

Just as the air surrounds us wherever we go so too does the image of the phantom horsewoman resonate in his mind wherever he is.

'everywhere in his brain' - it is the only thing that fills his thoughts - the memory is pleasant but it also creates a sense that he is holding on to something false - false happiness - pretense.

'time touches her not' - she does not change in his memory because she isn't <sup>anymore</sup> real - time does not affect her

'the swing of the tide' - gives the tide a human quality to give the image that it is moving back and forth just as a person does when they swing.