

Candidate 8 evidence

Let Me Count the Ways Imaginative Writing by

How many birds in a flock? Mair than ye kin count! An' that's how many years Ah've bin fishing, but never wance huv Ah caught a single fish. Ah'm no' in the business ae catchin' fish, ye see. Naw! Ma joab is much mair difficult than that. When Ah fish, Ah fish tae catch the *stars*...

Ah remember gazin' doon upon yer bonnie wee world fae ma lofty perch way up in your sky. Ah remember when Ah could hear your world singing. Aw the sounds o' creation. It wis marvellous. Oh, the days whaur Ah wis a young lad! How Ah wid dance tae your world's sweet pibroch. Ah'd jist be jugglin' the stars, tastin' the lightning and spittin' oot aw the thunder. Oh, ma pal, ye *really* should hae seen me dauncin'! Help ma boob, Ah wis marvellous!

As fur noo? Ah've seen better days - that's fur sure. Days where there wasnae that constant creakin' noise every time Ah move; days whaur ma creased eyes didnae make folk want tae iron ma face (should they ever paye me a visit); and the remains of whit used tae be ma nicest suit wasnae in tatters. But that's whit happens, ken? Ye git auld. Wizened an' aw that.

A loat changes when ye don't watch things close enough. Ye see, Ah've lived a long, long time. Bin aroon' tae see the creation ae your bonnie planet. An' there ain't one doot in ma mind that Ah'll be aroon fir the solemn day whaur it jist ceases tae exist. No' many folk kin say that they'll live forever, an' ye will indeed be a lang time deid.

As fur me, Ah never stop sailin'. Its ma joab, ye see? Ah'm the wan tae brighten up even the bleakest and blackest ae nights oan ma precious pearl here, gliding through the darkness upon this braw shield ae light.

Tell me, how hard dae ye look at yer own night sky? Dae ye take the time tae *really* look?

Dae ye see the colours? Ah see them aw the time when Ah'm fishin' aff ae ma crescent perch. Ah watch how the blackness ae night transforms so elegantly intae the most mesmerising blue, an' gaze at how silver wind swirls itself aroon' the vast amount ae space leaving its everlasting mark - even if only fir a second. Dae ye ever see me? Reelin' in your dazzling stars? Glowing, fading then glowing again! Explodin' wae life and scattering itself across the canvas ae night like dust. Ah will tell ye this though, ye cin wrap yerself up intae a cocoon ae night's embrace. Ye cin pretend tae shield yourself way its disguise, but no matter wit, ye will never be mair exposed tae anything than when draped ain its dark blanket. Cause whaur cin you possibly hide in the darkness when ye huv been so delightfully kissed by aw the stars?

Mind you, it's right lonely up hear the best ae times. Ah don't get many visitors, ye see. The last folk that came tae visit stuck a pole through ma curved ship. Numpties! Ah don't ken whit the pole's purpose wis right enough, bit they cin awa' n bile their heads if it wis a fur sale sign! Ye canny own the moon, ye see! An' you never will. The moon is far tae bonnie wae its glorious imperfections. The way it staunds high above even your tallest mountains, so far away it's out ae yer reach. Dae you see when the moon gits tired? When she becomes pale within her own misty veil? She never stops. You folk are lucky that ye will never see her rest.

Solitary, sad and lonely... Oh, how Ah had resembled the moon!

Like Ah said, Ah don't own the moon. Ah wis chosen by it, ye see? Imperfect and flawed, Ah mirrored it. Like the moon, Ah wis tarnished, craters and holes blemished ma already crumpled skin... Bit like the moon, Ah also shined out in times ae darkness!

Well, that's whit *she* told me...

The first time Ah met Her, Ah wis travellin' through the stars, until Ah noticed that Ah wasn't sailin' on the blue silk ae night anymare, bit on Ah burnt orange sky. An' in that moment, Ah swear Ah felt pity fur the stars, fur looking at nuthin' bit the moon, when the mother of light wis illuminating her warmth an' embracing all in it. Ah remember reachin' oot, trying tae grasp her rays of light. Her yellow warmth filled me from head tae toe! The way she moved wae the sky wis like a dance... She wis the sun! An' she wis radiant!

Bit jist as soon as she came, she hud tae leave. Ah watched her pulling back the curtain ae night as she soared through the sky, and Ah became jealous that Ah could no longer feel the heat ae day on my glowing ship an' that Ah knew that some folk were getting tae live in the light, whilst Ah lived in ma darkness wance mair.

Ah remember thinkin' that Ah had never seen the night look so horrifyingly beautiful. A graveyard ae stars, longing after a light it wid never feel.

Many a time Ah wid try tae catch her eye. Bit we were always movin' at different times, ye see? It made me sad, the days whaur Ah saw her. Some days she shined sae bright, bit on others she looked jist lonely. On those days the clouds were coverin' her up - making an unbreakable shield - so that even her glorious, glimmering beams ae light couldnae break through. On those days the moon would cry tears ae stars, bit even they seemed tae forget how tae shine. Ah remember how one night ma heart burst intae fiery red flames - so that on those days, I could shine enough fir us both. Some days Ah almost gave up...

Ah wis dozin' when the night sky transformed wance mare intae that sublime orange blaze. Ah could feel the warmth caressin' ma skin, an Ah jist new. My, she wis bonnie!

Sunlight poured from her veins, an' her eyes sparkled sae brightly that even the stars were dazzled by the sight. Bit Ah knew that this moment wisnae gonnae last. It wis there tae be cherished, savoured. So, we danced, an' talked, an' toasted the stars. Ah knew then that Ah had been kissed by a light so divine that Ah wid never feel the darkness ae night again. No' in the same way.

But aw too soon it wis time tae bid good morning, "Goodnight". So Ah departed wae the promise that Ah wid collect a star fir everyday that we were apart. That way, when we meet again, we kin scatter them across the sky fir aw tae see. An we will make the face o' night so fine, that aw the world will fa' in love wae it.

So, that's why Ah fish fir the stars. It's a promise. It's a hope. A covenant, ye might say, atween me an' her.

Ah've seen her many times. An' no matter how auld we become, whenever we meet again we dance an' we talk an' we bid good morning, "Goodnight". The moon still cries, and sometimes the stars forget tae shine sae bright, bit Ah jist bide ma time, waitin' fir the day when we'll meet wance mare. The day where your world will gaze in wonder at our harmonious eclipse.

How dae Ah love her? Let me count the ways... Fir Ah have night and light and the half-light. Fir all eternity...

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