

Candidate 9 evidence

Higher English - Creative writing

Title - Porphyria Speaks

What am I to you? Nothing but,
A 'smiling rosy little head'?
Your own fantasy of an innocent to corrupt?
I told you that night after I fled
That great gathering, abandoned all of my friends,
And stole away into the night.
Oh how it broke my heart to think,
Of you alone and cold upon this winter's eve,
With no one but the treacherous weather, the howling wind and pelting rain
For company
So distressed was I, so wrought
With horror grief and pain,
I entered in,
The middle of the night, to find,
My lover, what a sight! That filled my heart with sadness,
As there you were, frozen and alone, sat still
Upon the sofa, pale and ill,
I ran to you my darling, won't you muse upon it? As I swept in,
Removed my sodden hat and coat,
And, for you, I set ablaze the logs
That rested in the fireplace.
The flames, crackled and sputtered out of the grate,
Like the tongues of Satan's men, hissing and beckoning
Can you recall, how at once I held you,
Called upon you? But to no avail, yet still – I persevered.
You said no words my dear, but then I needed nothing but your presence
To give assurance of how perfectly I loved you
Why, my love! Oh how I thought to myself so often

“Why surely I would love him still, were he to take my life, surely with my dying breath I would tell him I adore him so!”

And, thought I, how pure, how beautiful is our love that I might love him after such a deed!

I thought myself lucky, blessed,

And I caressed your face and laid your head upon my breast,

When suddenly, I spied, a gleam in your eyes, and soon enough

Your face lit up, as though to make it known you felt the same.

Your hand arose, wavering before you held in your grasp

A lock of my hair,

I watched, entranced, as you wove it through your fingers,

Twisting, turning, as though it were a golden serpent and you its master,

Charming it to do your bidding as it danced through your hands.

So fixated was I on these wild oscillations,

That I failed to realise, until it was too late,

It slithered around my throat, tighter and tighter until I was left,

As nothing but a corpse, a lifeless shell of myself.

I watched from across the room, confounded by what I saw,

My own body, cold and dead,

Held in your arms as you unwound that accursed creature from my neck,

And opened up my lids, to show

My blue eyes, icy as the storm that tore down trees nearby.

You raised my head to rest upon your shoulder,

Laying a kiss upon my brow,

As though to show you cared, but now,

It seems instead, you cared for nought

But safety in the knowledge I could be no man's but yours.

If only you had known, had thought to ask me of my feelings...

Alas, you did not and there we sit,

I told you we would be as one forever,

Is this how you ensured it?

546 words

Bibliography

Poem – Imaginative response

Porphyria's lover, Robert Browning

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/175584>