

Love and Relationships (2)

Key Themes

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Romantic Love
 Familial Love
 Longing/ loss
 Obsession
 Nature
 Death/age

Summary of each poem's Key Themes

Romantic Love	Familial Love	Longing/Loss	Obsession	Nature	Death/Age
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •When we two parted •Neutral Tones •Winter Swans •Singh Song •Love's Philosophy •The Farmer's Bride •Porphyria's Lover •Sonnet 29: I think of thee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Walking Away •Follower •Mother, Any Distance •Climbing my Grandfather •Eden Rock •Before you were mine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •When we two parted •Neutral Tones •Winter Swans •Love's Philosophy •Porphyria's Lover •Sonnet 29: I think of thee •Walking Away •Mother, Any Distance •Before you were mine •Letters from Yorkshire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Singh Song •Love's Philosophy •The Farmer's Bride •Porphyria's Lover •Before you were mine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •When we two parted •Neutral Tones •Winter Swans •Love's Philosophy •Sonnet 29: I think of thee •Walking Away •Follower •Climbing my Grandfather •Eden Rock •Letters from Yorkshire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •When we two parted •Neutral Tones •The Farmer's Bride •Porphyria's Lover •Walking Away •Follower •Mother, Any Distance •Climbing my Grandfather •Eden Rock •Before you were mine

The Farmer's Bride

- **Romantic Love:** The initial romantic idea of love within their marriage transforms into fear as the bride is **subjected to objectification** (treated as an object) **and subjugation** (under his control). Stripped of her identity in the poem, she symbolises the **farmer's marginalisation** (treated as insignificant) and **dehumanisation** (treated as less than a human) of her.

- "Chose a maid"

- **Obsession:** The farmer's emphasis on her youth emphasises his obsessive desire to **maintain control and exploit her completely**, ensuring she remains under his authority with no autonomy and is unable to escape.

- "She runned away" "We caught her"

- **Death/age:** The depiction of the bride's youth highlights her vulnerability and the extent of her **subjugation** (controlled). The use of lifeless imagery to describe her physical appearance illustrates how **oppression has drained her vitality and robbed her of her youthfulness**.

- "The brown of her—her eyes, her hair, her hair"

Porphyria's Lover

- **Romantic Love:** The poem explores romantic love through the lens of male **hubris** (excessive-pride) within a **patriarchal** (male-dominated) society. The male speaker **idealises the object** of his affection to an extreme, leading to her **dehumanisation** (treated less than a human) and portrayal as a **de-personalised object of worship**.

- *"Her smooth white shoulder bare" "yellow hair displaced"*

- **Obsession + Longing + Death:** The speaker longs to preserve Porphyria in his unrealistic, idolised perception of her which leads to him committing murder. His delusional obsessions lead to him fulfilling his desires to preserve her innocence in her death.

- *"Laughed the blue eyes without a stain"*

Sonnet 29: I think of thee

- **Romantic Love + Nature:** Browning uses natural imagery to show the **timelessness and boundlessness** of her love – she makes it appear to align with the **natural order of the earth**. The natural imagery reinforces how this love for her beloved is **innate** (natural) and intrinsic (naturally within).

• *“I think of thee! – my thoughts do twine and bud”*

- **Longing:** The poet highlights a desire for **physical closeness and emotional intimacy** within her **boundless** love. Every thought, every moment, is intertwined with the beloved, showing a longing that **transcends** (go beyond) mere physical want.

• *“Because, in this deep joy to see and hear thee”*

Walking Away

- **Familial love + Longing:** The speaker's longing is **rooted in nostalgia**, to **momentarily avoid the painful passing of time**. Confronting the emotional distance and evolution of their parent-child bond proves to be a difficult reality to come to terms with.

• *"Like a satellite / Wrenched from its orbit"*

- **Nature + age:** the natural imagery portrays the **gradual transition into adulthood** as both a **natural progression** and an immensely emotional experience. Despite the **unavoidable progression into adulthood**, it is a painful and **inevitable detachment**.

• *"Sunny day with the leaves just turning"*

Follower

- **Familial love + nature:** The speaker fondly recounts the **idolisation** of his father in his youth. He **radiates admiration** in regards to his strength and power, the natural imagery **compounding** his father's physical strength and skill in the fields.

- *"His shoulders globed like a full sail strung"*

- **Longing + age:** The fond reminiscent tone is understood when paralleled to the now **feeble** (weak) presentation of his father. He longs to recall the strength and power of his father, not letting those memories be **tainted** (stained) by his current **deteriorating** state.

- *"It is my father who keeps stumbling"*