

singular
↑
sorrowful
loss
exhalation
"O"

A Dead Rose
Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1850)

personif. ↑
capit. exclamation
repetition 21x's

O Rose! who dares to name thee?
No longer roseate now, nor soft, nor sweet;
But pale, and hard, and dry, as stubble-wheat, —
Kept seven years in a drawer — thy titles shame thee.

lost beauty + died
former glory (was)
funeral?
ignored now
w/ lost beauty + sweetness

The breeze that used to blow thee
Between the hedgerow thorns, and take away
An odour up the lane to last all day, —
If breathing now, — unsweetened would forego thee.

The sun that used to smite thee,
And mix his glory in thy gorgeous urn,
Till beam appeared to bloom, and flower to burn, —
If shining now, — with not a hue would light thee.

rose cannot be illumin. w/ light & unappeal. now

The dew that used to wet thee,
And, white first, grow incarnadined, because
It lay upon thee where the crimson was, —
If dropping now, — would darken where it met thee.

ugly, withered rose makes me sad + gloomy

The fly that lit upon thee,
To stretch the tendrils of its tiny feet,
Along thy leaf's pure edges, after heat, —
If lighting now, — would coldly overrun thee.

The fly even avoids the rose (+ bee) - winged beings?

The bee that once did suck thee,
And build thy perfumed ambers up his hive,
And swoon in thee for joy, till scarce alive, —
If passing now, — would blindly overlook thee.

nothing more to give

The heart doth recognise thee,
Alone, alone! The heart doth smell thee sweet,
Doth view thee fair, doth judge thee most complete, —
Though seeing now those changes that disguise thee.

good heart notices the changes + does not judge its looks

Yes, and the heart doth owe thee
More love, dead rose! than to such roses bold
As Julia wears at dances, smiling cold! —
Lie still upon this heart — which breaks below thee!

rose, neglected, + deserves to be admired + loved

many metaphors

* Shift from metaphors to heart seeing rose for what it is w/ judgement

Rose → Lie still upon this heart — which breaks below thee!
Julia's sadness Julia

* iambic pentameter

* pairing of apostrophe & personification disputes anthropocentric approach of romantic poetry

* Rhyme scheme (ABBA) →

* excessive use of "thee" (21x's)

* poem can be an analogy for aging, or perhaps illness

* ecocritical or ecofeminist = insightful analysis (contemporary)

* natural realm is subj. of love poem, replacing tradition. human subj. thus contrasting the nurturing environ. of nature w/ humanity's fatal disregard of nature

* highlights faults of humanity's anthropocentric views

* presents nature as a mentor & exploits the pedagogical benefits of ecological metaphors

[speaker pities rose]