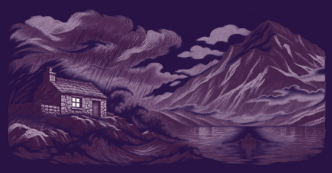
EXAM STASH

LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS

FOLLOWER

Seamus Heaney



WHAT HAPPENS? A child admires a skilled farming father; the ending reverses who follows whom.

BIG IDEA **Admiration for a parent's mastery develops into an uneasy recognition that dependence can reverse.**

FOUR EVIDENCE FRAGMENTS · ZOOM IN, THEN EXPLAIN

"full sail"

Simile

The father's shoulders suggest strength and controlled movement.

"expert"

Minor sentence

The isolated judgement concentrates the child's admiration.

"stumbled"

Verb

The son's uncertain movement contrasts with paternal precision.

"stumbling"

Role reversal

The changed subject complicates whether following means care, burden or persistent memory.

FORM

Six quatrains with alternating full and slant rhymes; the final stanza turns from childhood to the present.

CONTEXT

Heaney's rural childhood informs the precision of farming language. The poem also explores inheritance and a son's different adult path.

COMPARE IT WITH…

Walking Away: changing family roles. Climbing My Grandfather: admiration through movement.

VOICE, TONE & FEELINGS · FOLLOW THE SHIFTS

Father at work

ADMIRING

Detailed observation presents a skilled body controlling the plough and horses.

Child following

SELF-DEPRECATING

The son wants to imitate that competence but remembers clumsiness and dependence.

Present reversal

UNEASY

The father becomes the follower, changing the title's original relationship.

FULL POEM: use your anthology. Evidence fragments are prompts for close reading.

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