

Student Essay on "The Glass" by Sharon Olds

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Essay

In the poem "The Glass" written by Sharon Olds, it reflects on a loved through unconventional images, material objects that suggest pain and unpleasantness rather than joy and love. When you think of a glass, you think of a mirror that reflects a beautiful face, but in this poem this glass is a simple tumbler filled with mucus. The loved one that is mentioned in the poem is the father, who is dying of cancer, and the way his condition is described, are very painful. The father's physical struggle just to swallow and spit is a very painful moment. Where it describes the glass of phlegm that stood there and his daughter is constantly emptying it and it would fill again stands for the daughter's love and the father's ability to accept it even in his painful condition. The daughter's act of staying and emptying the glass represents not only fortitude and loyalty but also the steadying influence stability and predictability. She begins to see the glass itself its regular filling and emptying of life and coming of death as a kind of center around which human activity revolves in orderly way. The father, once the center of the family's universe, now seems to move with the others around the fact of death as represented by the glass. Even though the picture maybe awful, and awful in its details, and awful for the fact that this person is losing her father, it is beautiful in its own way. The poem shows that life and love can be portrayed, explained, and imprinted on our memories by even the most unattractive events, objects, and words.