

The Rival Key Info

Writer: Sylvia Plath | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Key Facts

- **Title:** The Rival
- **Poet:** Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)
- **Written Date:** January 21, 1962
- **Publication Date:** It was published in her posthumous collection, *Ariel*, in 1965
- **Style:** Confessional Style, where poets share deeply personal emotions
- **Form:** Free verse (no fixed structure or stanza length)
- **Meter and Rhyme Scheme:** Irregular; no consistent metrical pattern; the poem has no rhyme scheme
- **Tone:** Sad, Bitter, Unfriendly, Resentful

Who is the Rival?

It is unclear who the rival is in this poem. Critics argue that the rival could be Assia Wevill, who had an affair with Plath's husband, Ted Hughes. The rival could be her husband, Ted Hughes himself. Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes had a tumultuous relationship. Plath was unhappy and depressed. She also wrote in her letters that Hughes physically abused her.