

The Skunk Theme

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Themes

Love and Longing : This poem shows how deeply the poet loves his wife and how much he misses her when they are far apart. While staying alone in California, he feels lonely at night and remembers her every moment. The skunk he sees outside reminds him of her beauty, mystery, and presence. The memory of his wife's small movements, like searching for her nightdress, makes him feel close to her again. Heaney turns an ordinary animal (the skunk) into a reminder of love and beauty. The poem shows that real love never fades, even with time or distance.