

Expects poem to be about parents divorcing but actually about child wanting to divorce parents.

Repetition of "I" throughout creates a strident tone and gives a sense of the teenager's introversion and self-centredness.

- * Dramatic monologue - girl addressing parents directly
- * 2 14-line stanzas - each with rhyming couplet at end
- * Variation on the sonnet - traditionally associated with love poetry - Kay commenting ironically on girl's situation - out of love.
- * Variation in line length reflects difference and gap in understanding between parents and child.

Divorce

Inversion - archaic form suggesting a romantic poet or Shakespeare - trying to sound serious.

I did not promise
to stay with you till death do us part, or
anything like that,
so part I must, and quickly. There are things

Childish statement

I cannot suffer
any longer: **Mother**, you never, ever said
a kind word

or a thank-you for all the tedious chores I have done;

Father, your breath
smells like a camel's and gives me the hump;

all you ever say is:
'Are you off in the cream puff, Lady Muck?'

In this day and age?

I would be better off in an orphanage.

I want a divorce.

There are parents in the world whose faces turn
up to the light

who speak in the soft murmur of rivers

and never shout.

There are parents who stroke their children's cheeks
in the dead of night

and sing in the colourful voices of rainbows,
red to blue.

These parents are not you. I never chose you.

You are rough and wild,

I don't want to be your child. All you do is shout
and that's not right.

I will file for divorce in the morning at first light.

Formal tone shows the speaker wants to be taken seriously - opposite of what's expected as it's a reversal of traditional wedding vows.

Makes you think it's going to reveal a tragic ordeal - sets up for humour of the revelation it's only about chores.

Formal use of these names to mock the serious tone.

Sound like something an adult would say - using parent's language to criticise them.

Short sentence - a very assertive and blunt statement - has a sense of finality like she has made up her mind and won't listen to reason.

Series of idealised images of parents - language echoes that of fairytales - reflects the speaker's naivety and lack of world experience.

Irony as speaker is the one coming across as wild unruly child.

Suggests that she has an unshakeable sense of right and wrong - shows limited world experience.

Legal expression - child is determined to sound grown up.

Melodramatic tone - typical teenager at a time in life when parents often seem irritating and embarrassing.

Pun to emphasise the humour in her anger towards her parents.

Prone to strops.

Hyperbole to end on melodramatic note - echoes idea of rejecting parents altogether.

Ironic role-reversal as it's usually the parents that scold children for not helping enough.

Father uses humour to deal with daughter's angst - only infuriates speaker more - his jovial voice as a contrast to her harsh one.

Repetition is ironic as there aren't really parents like this. Sounds like she is whining and trying to justify her decision.

Immature, whining tone - trying to hurt her parents.

Grandiose tone returns - short, matter-of-fact statements.

Grand dramatic ultimatum - suggests it was a late night disagreement and the idea that everything will be fine tomorrow.

Enjambment to show that the girl feels that it goes on and on. Contrasts with our original impression of the good humoured father.

Themes

- * Adolescence
- * Family Relationships