

Image of basket referred to at both start and end.
- framing device
- starts and ends with Matthew absent and Kay yearning.

Links in with the gap his absence leaves in her life and the separation between the two - also reflects the 28 years that have felt like a short gap.

Inability to believe baby will arrive reflected at start of section 2 when she can't imagine his return.

Expresses the closeness of the bond - baby is already pushing against constraints.

Themes
* Growing up
* Love
* Family Relationships

Section 1 - Charts Kay's pregnancy and birth - short length suggest brevity of babyhood.

WC - repeated throughout poem - conveying intensity of longing

Colloquial nickname

Sentiment repeated at the end.

Rhyme suggests the impact he has on her life + significance of his birth - also emphasises that his due date was missed.

Suggests reluctance to leave her - strong bond - irony as now he is unwilling to return.

Recalls the opening of the poem - sense of longing.

WC - Connotations of anxiety

Role reversal - usually a child that follows the parent. "trails" has connotations of plotting a journey.

Emphasises the range and scale of Matthew's travels.

Grandfather's warning introduces humour and also a sense of realism.

Connotations of discovering new worlds - like a conquistador.

Adds humour - a youthful reference.

Fleeting - doesn't see him enough.

Another marker of change.

Gap Year (for Mateo)

Connotations of purity and innocence of baby.

Metaphor - image of a container - by end of poem it's clear Matthew can't be contained. Snugginess of child held safely in womb.

List of present participles suggest ongoing feelings - they seem fresh + current, constant, continuous - contrast with later absence.

I
I remember your Moses basket before you were born.
I'd **stare** at the **fleecy white sheet** for days, weeks,
willing you to arrive, hardly able to believe
I would ever have a real baby to put in the basket.

Synaesthesia - closeness of pregnancy - his experiences are hers - contrast to later with experience through webcam.

I'd feel the **mound of my tight tub of a stomach**,
and you moving there, **foot against my heart**,
elbow in my ribcage, turning, burping, awake, asleep.
One time I imagined I felt you laugh.

Oxymoron - physically close but unknown - inverted at end of the poem - mother/son bond is close but he's a stranger physically through distance.

I'd play you Handel's Water Music or Emma Kirkby singing Pergolesi. I'd talk to you, **my close stranger**,
call you **Tumshie**, ask **when you were coming to meet me**.
You arrived **late**, the very hot summer of eighty-eight.

Sense of longing

Idea of new week symbolising a new chapter/beginning.

Sense of completion as the wait is over and the basket is no longer empty.

You had passed the due date string of eights,
and were **pulled out with forceps**, blue, floury,
on the fourteenth of August on **Sunday** afternoon.
I took you home on **Monday** and **lay you in your basket**.

Affectionate description - contrast with appearance on webcam later.

Kay flies past his childhood as though it's passed in an instant.

II
Now, I **peek** in your room and **stare** at your bed
hardly able to imagine you back in there sleeping,
Your handsome face - soft, open. Now you are eighteen,
six foot two, **away, away** in **Costa Rica, Peru, Bolivia**.

Repetition emphasises the distance between them and how strongly she feels the separation.

I follow your trails on my Times Atlas:
from the Caribbean side of Costa Rica to the Pacific,
the baby turtles to the massive leatherbacks.

List of South American countries - exotic, distant, connotations of adventure and exploration.

Then on to Lima, to Cuzco. Your grandfather
rings: 'Have you considered altitude sickness,
Christ, he's sixteen thousand feet above sea level.'
Then to the **lost city of the Incas, Macchu Picchu**,
Where you **take a photograph of yourself with the statue**

Compares her son's travels and his growth to adulthood to sea turtles - reminder of how far he has come since the Moses basket.

Symbol of changing/ experiencing new things.

of the original Tupac. You are wearing a Peruvian hat.
Yesterday in Puno before catching the bus for Copacabana,
you suddenly appear on a webcam and blow me a kiss,
you have **a new haircut; your face is grainy, blurry**.

Recalls the initial "floury" baby he used to be - contrasts with the baby scan in the next stanza - one is present; the other a moment from the past.

Grown up posture adds humour to the image - Kay implies he had maturity and elegance in the womb - shows her affection.

She still sees him as her innocent little boy.

Comparison between present and past - both grainy pictures not quite there.

Suggests sheer scale of his adventure.

Ambitious, broad, sweeping plans - continues image of Matthew as an explorer.

He seems to have become part of a new group - doesn't rely on how anymore.

Seeing you, **shy, smiling**, on the webcam reminds me of the second scan at twenty weeks, how at that fuzzy moment back then, **you were lying cross-legged with an index finger resting sophisticatedly on one cheek**.

Grandfather displays parental urge to protect - represents the voice of age/ limitation/fear/worry/caution - contrasts with Matthew's carefree plans.

List of experiences and countries creates the impression of a man wanting to expand his world contrast to his safe containment earlier in the poem.

You started the Inca trail in **Arctic conditions and ended up in subtropical**. Now **you plan the Amazon** in Bolivia. Your grandfather rings again to say **'There's three warring factions in Bolivia, warn him**

Exasperated tone shows her disappointment that her son isn't coming home soon.

against it. He can't see everything. Tell him to come home.' **But you say all the travellers you meet rave about Bolivia. You want to see the Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt-flats, the Amazonian rainforest.**

Mirrors being 4 weeks overdue as a baby.

Struggling to keep up with plans - unpredictable nature of youth.

Pun - usually to be applied to a child - role-reversal.

And now you are not coming home till four weeks after your due date. After Bolivia, you plan to stay with a friend's Auntie in Argentina. Then - to Chile where you'll stay with friends of Diane's.

Human rights and solidarity movement in Chile.

Symbolic - the light has left her life in Matthew's absence.

Plans are fluid and uncertain.

And **maybe** work for the **Victor Jara Foundation**. I feel like **a home-alone mother; all the lights have gone out in the hall**, and now **I am wearing your large black slippers, flip-flopping**

Onomatopoeia - sad pathetic sound - lacking energy - she's going back and forth - no purpose?

Recalls willing him to arrive at start of poem.

Just like children playing grown up by trying on clothes.

Recalls empty cot - sense of empty nest syndrome.

into your **empty bedroom, trying to imagine you** in your bed. I stare at the photos you send by messenger: **you on the top of the world, arms outstretched**, eager. **Blue sky, white snow; you by Lake Tararhua, beaming.**

Recalls the colours at his birth.

He opens his arms and brings her into his journey. Metaphor - has everything he wants in life.

Fitzgerald is associated with the Blues - reflects sadness.

My heart soars like the birds in your bright blue skies. **My love glows like the sunrise over the lost city. I sing along to Ella Fitzgerald, A tisket A tasket. I have a son out in the big wide world.**

Reinforced symbolism of light - Matthew is the light of her life.

A **flip** and a **skip** ago, **you were dreaming** in your **basket**.

Simile - reinforces idea of Matthew as light - Kay is imagining herself present with Matthew in the form of her love - she's become bound to the landscape he travels through.

Simile - image of pride and joy - compares her elation to birds ascending. Like her son, she's being liberated from the restrictive encompassing need to be together that she's been absorbed in.

Jackie Kay

Tiny moments reflected in short "l" sound. He has grown up too quickly.

Proud, declarative statement - proud of him and herself - now seems happy to accept the situation.

His dreaming has turned into living. Now it's Kay who dreams of his return.

Rhymes with "tasket" - emphasises importance of word - Kay's longing for that time when he could be contained.

Nursery rhyme - recalls Matthew's boyhood - lyrics are about delivering a love letter to a little boy.