

Duffy was friends with a war photographer and was intrigued by the challenges they face.

Word choice - place of peace and sanctuary after being confronted with horrors.

Rigid structure contrasts with the chaotic images described in poem. They mirror the photographer who tries to maintain a strict order.

Intimate and tranquil setting of his dark room. He's normally surrounded by chaos and values this time alone - enjambment creates sense of reflection.

War Photographer

Alliteration draws attention to the horrific images and the fact he tries to restore order to the chaotic images.

In his dark room he is finally alone with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.

Connotations of the light that burns in Catholic churches to symbolise the presence of Christ - also bold - he's seen a lot of this.

The only light is red and softly glows, as though this were a church and he a priest preparing to intone a Mass.

Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.

One word sentences for each war zone he has photographed. Each gets its own sentence to highlight how important it is to remember.

Religious imagery - simile compares him to a priest - sense of ritual in the way he develops film - has seen difficult things - same respect a priest would have when preparing for communion.

From New Testament - emphasises how fragile life is and that all must die

Short sentence breaks calmness of darkroom and reminds him of his responsibility.

He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays beneath his hands, which did not tremble then though seem to now. Rural England. Home again to ordinary pain which simple weather can dispel, to fields which don't explode beneath the feet of running children in a nightmare heat.

Alliteration - ambiguous meaning - could be the chemicals used or his hope that the pictures may help to resolve the conflicts they depict.

In order to do his job he must remain detached and professional - but when he's alone the emotion gets to him.

Famous photo of kids running from napalm attack in Vietnam helped end the conflict - but now we have become desensitised to these images.

Our children don't have to worry about landlines whilst playing - injustice.

He notes the contrast between home and the war zones - our problems are sorted by good weather - no idea of real suffering.

Adds drama and suspense - suggests he is not fully in control.

Something is happening. A stranger's features faintly start to twist before his eyes, a half-formed ghost. He remembers the cries of this man's wife, how he sought approval without words to do what someone must and how the blood stained into foreign dust.

Suggests both the development of the picture and the pain of his last moments.

Picture hasn't developed fully but as the man no longer exists he has become a ghost - "ghost" has connotations of haunting - idea that these images haunt him.

Couldn't communicate with the wife and had to rely purely on looks - like a priest - had to attend to his final moments - profession is a calling.

Connotations of extreme pain - highlights the suffering of these people.

Word choice - connotations of something permanent - always to be remembered.

Careless indifference of editor shows how little we care for the people suffering far away.

Bathos - insincere response from us - we feel pity for a while but then return to over indulgent lives.

A hundred agonies in black and white from which his editor will pick out five or six for Sunday's supplement. The reader's eyeballs prick with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers. From the aeroplane he stares impassively at where he earns his living and they do not care.

He doesn't feel that he belongs to either world.

Growing acceptance that despite his best efforts his photos will make no difference.

Themes

- * Horrors of war
- * Apathy
- * Loss
- * Isolation

Carol Ann Duffy

Duffy shares an affinity with war photographers - they use photography to convey truths about the human condition - she uses words and language to do the same.