

Porphyria's Lover

Comment [I1]: See separate notes

The rain set early in to-night,

Comment [I2]: Pathetic fallacy lines 1 +2

The sullen wind was soon awake,

Comment [I3]: Suggest it rains every night

It tore the elm-tops down for spite,

Comment [I4]: Sulky, moody – creating atmosphere

And did its worst to vex the lake:

Comment [I5]: Personification of wind

Comment [I6]: Violent verb

Comment [I7]: Continued personification of the weather – vengeful

Comment [I8]: Annoy/irritate

I listened with heart fit to break.

Comment [I9]: 1st person narrative

Comment [I10]: Melancholy narrator

When glided in Porphyria; straight

Comment [I11]: Verb suggesting smooth movement - supernatural

She shut the cold out and the storm,

Comment [I12]: She was able to make the ir surroundings better

And kneeled and made the cheerless grate

Comment [I13]: Subservient happy to work + look after him

Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;

Comment [I14]: Personification – suggests misery + cold

Comment [I15]: The fire springs into life

Which done, she rose, and from her form

Comment [I16]: Contrast to outside

Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,

Comment [I17]: She tends to the fire first before her own comfort

And laid her soiled gloves by, untied

Comment [I18]: Verb to suggest dirty and spoil rather than just wet

Her hat and let the damp hair fall,

Comment [I19]: Despite the hat she is soaked through

And, last, she sat down by my side

Comment [I20]: Finally sits next to him

Comment [I21]: Says his name

And called me. When no voice replied,

Comment [I22]: He doesn't reply to her at this point so no conversation has taken place since she entered the cottage

She put my arm about her waist,

Comment [123]: So far the lady is doing everything – the man has neither moved voluntarily nor spoken

And made her smooth white shoulder bare,

Comment [124]: Is this provocative/temptation?

And all her yellow hair displaced,

Comment [125]: He is very specific about the colour

And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,

Comment [126]: Verb to suggest messed up – it had been pinned up but was now loose

And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,

Comment [127]: She has to bend down towards him – she pulls him towards her

Murmuring how she loved me---she

Comment [128]: Whispering to him

Too weak, for all her heart's endeavour,

Comment [129]: Could mean she is too weak for the passion she creates

To set its struggling passion free

Comment [130]: Can't express her physical feelings towards him

From pride, and vainer ties dissever,

Comment [131]: Suggests that she is too proud and conscious of social attitudes to consummate their relationship

And give herself to me for ever.

Comment [132]: Sense that he wants her only for himself

But passion sometimes would prevail,

Comment [133]: Sometimes they were physically close

Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain

Comment [134]: Happy occasion

A sudden thought of one so pale

For love of her, and all in vain:

Comment [135]: He is sick with love for her

So, she was come through wind and rain.

Comment [136]: He sees his live as futile

Comment [137]: There is the suggestion that she has struggled to be with him

Be sure I looked up at her eyes

Comment [138]: He is looking up to her

Happy and proud; at last I knew

Comment [139]: Moment of realisation that she loves him beyond measure – worshipped – very powerful verb

Porphyria worshipped me; surprise

Comment [I40]: He is shocked by the revelation

Made my heart swell, and still it grew

Comment [I41]: He is pleased and proud that he is worshipped by her

While I debated what to do.

Comment [I42]: Suggests that there is a decision to be made about his realisation that she worships him

That moment she was mine, mine, fair,

Comment [I43]: Suggestion of his desire for complete and permanent possession of her

Perfectly pure and good: I found

Comment [I44]: This is how he sees her at this moment

A thing to do, and all her hair

Comment [I45]: He realises what he must do to stay in possession of her perfect and complete love

In one long yellow string I wound

Comment [I46]: Her hair is symbolic of her beauty but also her destiny

Three times her little throat around,

Comment [I47]: Adjective to suggest frailty and smallness – until now he has been looking up to her

And strangled her. No pain felt she;

Comment [I48]: Matter-of-fact, blunt, to the point

I am quite sure she felt no pain.

As a shut bud that holds a bee,

Comment [I49]: Simile to suggest that her death is just like the closing of flower petals around a bee – he is the bee – he will always be with her even though she is dead – will no longer flower – the shut bud symbolic of her refusing to consummate the relationship

I warily ope'd her lids: again

Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.

Comment [I50]: The expression in her eyes has not changed. This is the start of the 'tableau vivant'

And I untightened next the tress

Comment [I51]: Death has not altered her beauty

About her neck; her cheek once more

Comment [I52]: Puts her body back to how it was before he had killed her

Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:

Comment [I53]:

I propped her head up as before,

Comment [I54]: Sign of life and blush caused by physical contact

Comment [I55]: He arranges the body

Only, this time my shoulder bore

Comment [I56]: She is now leaning on him rather than him leaning on her

Her head, which droops upon it still:

Comment [I57]: strangled

The smiling rosy little head,

Comment [I58]: sweetly smiling forever preserved in this perfect state

So glad it has its utmost will,

Comment [I59]: her head

That all it scorned at once is fled,

Comment [I60]: she is perfect to him now – any disagreements they had have gone

And I, its love, am gained instead!

Comment [I61]: he feels better now he is in possession of her true love

Porphyria's love: she guessed not how

Her darling one wish would be heard.

Comment [I62]: her expressed desire to love him forever has been granted by him killing her

And thus we sit together now,

Comment [I63]: As though there is nothing out of the ordinary

And all night long we have not stirred,

Comment [I64]: suggests companionable sitting together even though she's dead

And yet God has not said a word!

Comment [I65]: He is mocking the fact that God has not punished him for his crime

Robert Browning

Weather physical features emotions