Poems And Fate Of Sylvia Plath

Poetry can deliver a special magnitude of given feelings and ideas. Poets do this by using extraordinary rhythms and styles. One of the most influential, intelligent, and admired poets in the 20th century was no one other than Sylvia Plath. This poet was considered massively dynamic, Plath scrutinizes her ambition by using death, self, and magnificent nature in her work than exposed her feeling towards the universe that she considered hers. On October 27, 1932, Sylvia Plath was born, she was born in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. Her birth parents were Otto and Aurelia Plath; Otto Plath was a German professor that studied and taught Zoology at Boston University. Also, Otto had an interest in Bees and studied them for a lifetime. Plath's mother, Aurelia Scholar Plath gave birth to Sylvia and her brother Warren Plath. At the age of eight, a tragedy would happen in Plath's life, her father Otto would die from the complexity of diabetes that he never treated. This tragedy would make Plath published her first poem in the children's category of the Boston Herald. Another importance we should add from Plath's life was that she would always keep a diary to write her thoughts in, she would have the diary all the way up until she died. In 1950, during Plath's high school years, she was very intelligent and a very creative writer, this would make her become accepted by Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. American novelist Olive Prouty would fund her a full scholarship based off her incredible acknowledgment of creative writing. In 1953, Plath was chosen to be one of the best college student editors of Mademoiselle magazine. During her junior year at Smith, Plath tried to commit suicide by taking an abundant number of prescription pills, but this attempt would be unsuccessful. Plath was sent to the hospital to be detoxed and sent to therapy, while she did not have the money to pay the hospital bills, Olive Prouty helped with the financial troubles. After this incident, Plath returned to Smith to finish her education. Plath went on to graduate from Smith in 1955 and would travel to England that was funded by a Fulbright scholarship. She went to England to study at Cambridge. During Plath's time at Cambridge, she met her companion English Poet Ted Hughes. The two met at a party. After their time spent together, Plath and Hughes went on and got married in 1956. The two moved to Boston Massachusetts Later on in Plath's life, she would go back to Smith College and be a professor there. In 1959, Plath and Hughes returned back to England to start their lives together and start a family; Plath would suffer a miscarriage and then give birth to two fascinating children, Frieda, and Nicholas Hughes. In 1963, Plath and Hughes would go on a get a divorce, and out of sorrow, Plath went on to write her famous poem "Daddy."

The poem was published in 1965. "Daddy" was one of Plath's best accomplishments in her poetry career. The poem is highly controversial. Lisa Sewell states in her literary criticism, "It may also be one of the best-known examples of confessional poetry in 20th-century literature, demonstrating both the positive and negative connotations associated with the term. It has been praised by critics, such as George Steiner, for successfully "translating a private, obviously intolerable hurt into a code of plain statement, of instantaneously public images with concern us all" (218)," (Sewell, pg. 1). "Daddy" nourishes in the action of being powerful because the speaker adjusts her suffering with the Jewish victims of the holocaust. The poem involves differences from other readers, for "Daddy' is a poem that analyzes and achieves one of the conflictions at the soul of identity. The poem expresses antagonism and pain, combining with repetitive phrasing and fierce imagery. It discusses the speakers' undetermined emotions about her father who died when she was eight years old, through a speaker who tries to free herself

from her father's evil spirits. Metaphorically, the speaker must kill her father, making herself his casualty. She must get rid of the pessimistic emotions she feels towards her frightening father. "Daddy is so powerful in style and form it was called for critical reviews by various literary critics. In Sylvia Plath's "Daddy," the speaker was ambivalent towards her dead father, throughout the poem the speaker provides imagery, historical backgrounds, and theme to demonstrate the struggle she was encountering during her traumatizing life.

First, in Sylvia Plath's poem "Daddy," the speaker provides imagery in the poem. While reading "Daddy," it can most likely leave you with emotional scars and uses unpleasant images to show the speaker's empathic mood towards her father. Literary critic Kimberly Crowley states, "The poem is terrifying to many readers, some of whom do not understand its references to the father as a German Nazi. Sylvia was combining images of her father, husband, and perhaps other male figures at whom she had been very angry over a lifetime together in the image of the father in the poem (119)", (Crowley, pg. 1). The images in the poem are powerful and you can notice throughout the poem the poet is very repetitive with imagery. In the poem, stanza 10 describes Nazi imagery, "The Nazi imagery of the last stanzas challenges the sense of divinity that the speaker had indicated, in the second stanza, hovered around her father, but not her sense of power. 'Not God but a swastika,' is the emblem she uses now to define him," (Gale, pg. 6). With the loss of the speakers' father, he clearly became a notable figure in his daughter's poetry; The speaker gave plenty of disheartening figures and fierce imagery towards her dead father. She uses a lot of figures to display what her father really was, such as him being a vampire, a Nazi, a devil, and revitalize him in the husband, "A man with a Mein Kampf look," that she would have killed too. While mentioning vampires, the imagery of vampires the speaker attached to her husband goes back to her father. She needs to kill him as if a vampire needs to be killed, with a stake through the heart; The speaker mentions, "There's a stake in your fat black heart" (Plath, Line 74). In addition, Plath gives good images and symbols of the Holocaust, Crowley states, "Arguably the Holocaust imagery in this poem gets the most notice and discussion from readers. Plath obliviously intended for the imagery to influence readers, and it seems unlikely she did not intend for readers to think about war the attempted obliteration of an entire group of people," (Crowley, pg. 10). Metaphorically, Plath used the holocaust and to not disturb the audience in any way shape or form, it was to display the wounds she had. Crowley would use in her literary criticism, "As has been brought up multiple times in the chapter, countless readers and critics were upset by her use of Holocaust imagery and thought it incredibly unfair of her to speak of being a Jew, especially since she was not Jewish," (Crowley, pg. 10). In "Daddy," in Stanza 7, the speaker referred to herself as a Jewish person, "A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen, I began to talk like a Jew, I think I may well be a Jew," (Plath, Line 31-33). The speaker referred to herself as a Jew to show that she was comparable to a Jewish prisoner, that was the imagery she wanted everyone to realize the pain and misery she was dealing with. Plath in "Daddy," indicates the speaker as herself, she is not a person who is alone, but she is a society that is collective. The imagery used in "Daddy" was truly dark, the words the speaker used in the poem influence the apprehension of hopelessness and heartache.

Moreover, in Sylvia Plath's poem "Daddy," the speaker gives historical backgrounds. This is what really gave Plath's poem taste. "Daddy" discusses a piece of history such as the holocaust and expresses feminism. The Gale article refers to the holocaust as a historical aspect in "Daddy," "Plath's comparison of herself to a Jew and her allusion to 'your Aryan eye, bright,' 'Dachau, Auschwitz, Belson,' 'an engine/chuffing,' 'a swastika,' and the 'Luftwaffe,' as well as a 'neat mustache' and a 'Meinkampf look' all allude to what has come

to be called the Holocaust or the Shao. The holocaust was the deliberate and carefully executed extermination of most of the population of European Jewry," (Gale, pg. 10). The Holocaust was a major historical background in Plath's poem "Daddy." She took the opportunity of exposure by introducing the Holocaust in the poem, Plath never did it to offend the audience, but to show her emotions. This piece of the poem was shocking but the shock was a piece of her poetic poem. Another historical background the poem offers is feminism, "In 1963, the same year that the poems in Ariel written and that Plath killed herself, an American journalist and union activist, Betty Friedan, who had graduated from Smith college thirteen years before Plath, published The Feminine Mystique and ushered in what is called the second wave of feminism in the United States," (Gale, pg. 10). This showed the Plath herself became a compelling existence for twentieth-century feminism. As Plath was not a feminist, she was a woman who understands the feminist view of this time. During the feminist movement, there were multiple waves; In 1919, the first wave came to the conclusion that white women were allowed to vote in the United States. The second wave had many problems of female inequality, biological determinism, subside opportunity, sexual and social freedom. Anyhow, "Daddy" became a part of the feminist movement. The Gale article mentions, "Daddy" became an iconic poem of the feminist movement, "Indeed, during the second wave of feminism in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, 'Daddy' became a feminist anthem, a sort of 'We Shall Overcome' of the Women's Liberation Movement. It was a poem immediately accessible to readers outside academia. It had the force of social provocation," (Gale, pg. 12). Most of Sylvia Plath's poems deliver powerful statements of the feminist movement, but "Daddy" led Plath to leave a feminist legacy that would live on forever.

Lastly, in Sylvia Plath's poem "Daddy," the speaker uses a theme throughout the poem.

There are various themes the speaker uses throughout "Daddy." The first theme she uses is ambivalence, the speaker needs to kill the father to free herself, but at the same time, she needs to tell her father that she needs to kill him for satisfaction. The speaker was undecided about the emotions she felt towards her father, which brings out the ambivalence regarding her relationship with him. Another theme the speaker uses is death, "The theme of death, pervasive in Plath's work and in her life – The Bell Jar is an account of her first suicide attempt in 1953 – hovers over 'Daddy," (Gale. Pg. 7). It appears that the death of the poet's father, the slaughtering of Jews by the Nazis, the poet's suicide attempt, and the need to kill her father to get rid of his presence really shows the vivid imagery of how the poet felt while writing "Daddy." In the second stanza, the poem states, "Daddy, I have had to kill you, you died before I had time --- Marble – heavy, a bag full of God," (Plath, Lines 2-4). This shows that death was a primary theme in Plath's poem "Daddy." In addition, Plath uses purgation in this poem as well, "Daddy" is a poem of purgation, written to liberate the poet from the ghost of her relationship with her father," (Gale pg. 8). Purgation was the exact method of disinfecting Plath speaks about in her poem. The writing in "Daddy" was the real purgative action used. Unfortunately, Plath's suicide attempt seemed to be a strong purgative in her heartbroken life. In addition, Plath gives resentment in her poem as well; The speaker in "Daddy" is haunted by resentment, the resentment is determined by the speaker's complete sensitive situation against the father. Arguably, the whole poem is a resentment. The themes in the poem "Daddy" are recognizable and pointed out.

Plath's poem "Daddy," was considered confessional poetry because it was a personal poem. Also, Plath herself was considered a confessional poet because of her brilliant writing. Kimberly Crowley states, "Plath admired poets like Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton, who are widely

considered Plath's major peers in the confessional movement," (Crowley, pg. 9). This showed that Plath admired other poets as well, they were like idols to her. By her admiring other poets, is what made Sylvia Plath put a spark in her poetry career.

Sylvia Plath's poem "Daddy," can be read as very angry and frustrating, yet the poem is massively powerful. In her poem, the speaker was ambivalent towards her dead father, throughout the poem the speaker provides imagery, historical backgrounds, and theme to show the struggles she was facing. In the end, "Daddy" is an emotional, psychological, and historical autopsy, a final communique. There is no progress whatsoever, the speaker is in the same place in the beginning as in the end of the poem. She begins an indecisive but familiar amorous daughter who parodies her attempt to rehabilitate the myth of her dead father. Plath had a clear idea of who the speaker was in the poem, "Although it seems that the speaker has moved from identification with the persecuted to identity as a persecutor, Jew to vampire killer, powerless to powerful, she has simply enacted a performance that allows her to live with what is unchangeable," (Gale, pg. 19).

It was a beginning of an end for Sylvia Plath, she could not escape the evil that overwhelmed her life; By February 1963 her marriage with Ted Hughes had ended. Plath was ill and living on the edge of another breakdown while caring for two of her children in a cramped flat in London ravage on the coldest winter in decades. On February 11, 1963, Plath committed suicide; Plath committed suicide by putting her head in the oven and leaving the gas on. Plath was an icon to everyone in the world. Her poetry has helped human beings greatly from those who suffer from depression and suicidal thoughts. Gale mentions, "After her death, her reputation as a poet and a feminist icon quickly became formidable. In 1982, after the publication of her collected poems, Plath was posthumously awarded a Pulitzer Prize," (Gale, Pg. 2). As a result, Sylvia Plath was an inspiration to us all and was one of the most outstanding poets to ever live, leaving a truly amazing legacy behind.