

## **Lear Town (tiffany)**

The first thing that I think when I read the name of this specific town is Shakespeare's King Lear who, to sum it up briefly, went insane and then met his death due to complicated family issues. And ties between Carson's poem and Shakespeare's tragic ruler can definitely be identified, thematically speaking. The story of King Lear takes place in the winter, he's the father of three daughters, he goes mad, and dies. There are references in the poem to death (bells clamoring followed by silence), madness, a paternal relationship ("as childhood / Precedes father"), and a tension throughout the poem. The tension is accomplished through the interesting and slightly confusing way in which the poem proceeds, utilizing the words "precedes" and "as" as connectors of concepts. There's a timeline created by the use of these specific words as well, which ends with the vivid picture of "the kill-hole". This is a pretty unsettling image because it brings death to the forefront and seems like a militaristic reference to me. Thus, this town seems like an allusion to the story of King Lear - mind games, failed relationships, and a hint of violent suggestion.

### *Amendments*

#### Lear Town (Allison)

I'm so glad that this analysis talks about the story of King Lear, which I really think the poem is referring to as well. The only other Lear I found online was Edward Lear, a nonsense poet from the 19th century who had 20 brothers and sisters. I couldn't find too many ways to tie this man with "Lear Town" though and was perfectly happy with the idea of the poem alluding to Shakespeare's King Lear who was a pretty tragic guy indeed.

#### Lear Town (tom)

I don't know very much about King Lear but the connection makes sense. The first and second lines that deal with bells give me a sort of medieval sense. Bells tolling used to mean so much, they announced worship, time passage, births deaths and more. I see the violence but I see it reflected upon in sadness especially in the last three lines. Winter preceding before father into the kill hole speaks to me of the untimely death of a child before it's parents.

#### Lear Town (casey)

Tiffany's analysis seemed pretty much on. Kill-hole was definitely the strongest part of the poem, jumping out. I looked up kill-hole and other than as the name of books, the only meaning I found for it was as reference to the hole in a Miembres bowls, which were buried with the dead, being placed over the skull. This occurred in Mogollon cultures between ninth and thirteenth century. The practice seems connected to some sort of passage into the next life. This sense of passage is reflected by Tiffany's analysis.

#### Lear Town: (courtney)

Definitely, Shakespeare's King Lear. It probably helped that you must have read the story, and knew how to connect it to the poem. Good job—I agree with everything you wrote. Everything you cited from Shakespeare makes what Carson written seem boldly relevant. I can't think of anything else that needs to be added to your analysis.

Lear Town (martin)

I remembered a King Lear but couldn't place his story. Thanks for clarifying it in your analysis. The "kill-hole" isn't very commonly used in writing at all, since I don't think it's ever been clearly defined, but you're right it carries a very violent mood. We end the poem, as readers, in a kill-hole. That's scary. The timeline concept is interesting also, especially who "proceeds" and "precedes" are two opposite verbs that Carson is playing off of. The analysis could be clearer on this huge contrast, instead of mentioning it briefly and cleverly.

Lear Town(craig)

One interesting thing that I found about this poem is that it makes only one really natural progression in "childhood precedes father" in that a man must be a child before he can be a father. However, the notion of madness preceding winter strikes me as a rather specific statement, meaning it is not as natural of a progression. But, the rest of the poem's flow seems to make it all feel like normal progression; maybe I'm confusing myself. The double meanings created by the word 'as' add a rather interesting twist on the things which precede one another. For example, "madness precedes winter" as "childhood precedes father", suggesting that both are natural progressions, or it can be read as "madness precedes winter as childhood", as winter here represents childhood, and the entire clause "precedes father". The word "precede" alone seems to imply these double meanings as it can mean chronologically speaking or surpassing in rank or order. Does this mean that madness outranks winter as childhood outranks father? I also am interested in this last line "Into the kill-hole" as I am confused as to what a kill-hole might be. Is it a hole in which one is killed or is it a wound? I am not very familiar with the Shakespeare play King Lear, and feel it is a very interesting way to read the poem, though it does not seem to be the only way.

Lear Town (marina)

Lear town, I too thought to be referencing King Lear, and the fact that the play takes place in the winter, and there is a war going on over the course of the play, hence the "kill hole" and the father – king Lear being a father of three daughters. Hence three times there are "bells", and three daughters have three husbands, hence precedes is repeated three times as well, as if each time the word is repeated it kind of stands for either one of the daughters or the husbands... Other than that, I agree with Tiffany...

Lear Town Amendment: (matt)

I'm not very familiar with the story of King Lear, but this analysis sure seems on the ball. A few things could strengthen its conclusions, though. First of all, the repetition and the unusual use of words such as "precedes" not only create tension, but they also convey the "madness" of King Lear much more effectively than the direct reference to madness (which may actually illustrate a sort of self-aware madness). Additionally, depending on how one punctuates Carson's lines, it could be read "as childhood /Precedes father /Into the kill-hole." If you are correct in the "childhood" and "father" references serving as a paternal relationship, then the poem is saying the child goes into the "kill-hole" before the father (precedes him), just as Cordelia dies before Lear does.

Lear Town (mike)

Tiffany's analysis seemed pretty much on. Kill-hole was definitely the strongest part of the poem, jumping out. I looked up kill-hole and other than as the name of books, the only meaning I found for it was as reference to the hole in a Miembres bowls, which were buried with the dead, being placed over the skull. This occurred in Mogollon cultures between ninth and thirteenth century. The practice seems connected to some sort of passage into the next life. This sense of passage is reflected by Tiffany's analysis.

Lear Town (abby)

The "falling bells" would make the loudest sound, then followed by a long silence, at least until they were put back up, so I do agree with Tiffany's idea of the death imagery. Because of the bell-falling thing, I think the death in question is someone "going out with a bang." King Lear is not a bad reference, I agree with that. Also, I found Edward Lear on Google, and he was a lighthearted (seemingly) individual who wrote limericks and drew comic-like cartoons. I do not think he is connected, really, because if he is, it is only for the sake of a contrast and a poor one at that, and I think Carson is above that sort of poor nonsense. So nevermind him.

Lear Town (monte)

I think it is important to notice the repetitive structure in the poem, when read without line breaks, and following the chronology. Falling bells precede silence of bells; madness precedes winter; childhood precedes father: into the kill-hole.