

Figurative Language Poem 9

Operating Room

By John Reed

Sunlight floods the shiny many-windowed place,
Coldly glinting on flawless steel under glass,
And blaring imperially on the spattered gules¹
Where kneeling men grunt as they swab the floor.

Startled eyes of nurses swish by noiselessly,
Orderlies² with cropped heads swagger like murderers;
And three surgeons, robed and masked mysteriously,
Lounge gossiping of guts, and wish it were lunch-time.

Beyond the porcelain door, screaming mounts crescendo³—
Case 4001 coming out of the ether,
Born again half a man, to spend his life in bed.



1. The color red
2. An hospital attendant responsible for the nonmedical care of patients, order, and cleanliness
3. A gradual increase in loudness or intensity

Review Questions

Directions: Respond to these questions to the best of your ability. Answer the questions completely. If you need more space, use the back or a separate sheet.

1. Identify one example of **simile**: explain which two things are being compared.
2. Identify one example of **metaphor**: explain which two things are being compared.
3. Case 4001 has likely come to what realization? Support your answer with textual evidence.
4. Identify one example of **hyperbole**: explain what is being exaggerated.
5. What is the subject of this poem? What is this poem about? Explain your response.
6. What is the **tone** of this poem? How does the speaker treat the subject of the poem? Refer to text.
7. What is the **mood** of this poem? How does this poem make you feel? Refer to text in your response.
8. What does this line “Lounge gossiping of guts, and wish it were lunch-time” reveal about the surgeons? Explain your answer.