Annotations: **‘Lucozade’**

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| **Line Number** | **Annotations** |
| **1** | * Opens with simple confessional **tone** reflecting speaker’s age/fear * ‘High bed’ suggests distance from speaker. Image of a pedestal/altar? * **Transferred epithet**: speaker’s sadness onto flowers. Stereotypical ‘hospital flowers’- mother rejects the stereotypical trapping of illness |
| **2** | * ‘they only’ – sense of inevitability * ‘wilt and die’ - flowers become image of death/fading/loss of vitality |
| **3 - 4** | * Simple confessional statement. Connects mother to flowers * Simple circular/symmetrical structure of stanza reflects speaker’s age/fear |
| **5** | * Suggests a lack of energy / fading of vitality |
| **6-8** | * ‘Lucozade / Orange nostalgia’ – **metaphor** * Mother rejects nostalgia/another stereotypical marker of illness |
| **8** | * ‘fades’ – **word choice** continues idea of light going out / vitality ebbing |
| **9** | * ‘blur’ – **word choice** – indistinct, unclear, senses impaired/fading * ‘a swarm of eyes’ – **metaphor** – feeling objectified, gawped at. Irritation. Passivity |
| **10** | * ‘white lies’ – recalls white coats. Idea of doctors dealing in half truths / medical euphemism (again reflects mother’s rejection of traditional approach to illness/death) |
| **11** | * **Rhetorical Question**. Magazine (another traditional symbol of hospital illness) cannot bring happiness |
| **12** | * Magazines obsessed with dieting and being slim 🡪 mother gaunt/emaciated through illness? * **End Rhyme** – ‘size’ with ‘eyes’ and ‘lies’ previously. Reflects monotony/’blur’ of hospital life? |
| **13** | * ‘Groggy’ – ironic link to alcohol mother asks for. Already groggy from illness/medicine |
| **14** | * Colon – marks **turning point** in poem from negatives to positives, from passivity to action, from acceptance to rejection |
| **15 - 16** | * **Alliteration** of ‘b’ and ‘g’ sounds * **Internal rhyme** of ‘gin’ and ‘tin’ * **List** of several luxuries * **Repetition** of ‘the’ * All techniques serve to emphasise the grandiose indulgence, recklessness, extravagance, naughtiness and life-affirming nature of the request. |
| **17** | * Emphasises speaker’s youth/inexperience of life. Contrasts with mother’s age/experience. Sense that mother’s situation(/death) is bewildering to speaker |
| **18 - 19** | * ‘Grapes have no imagination’ - **personification / transferred epithet**. Implied criticism of visitors/father who bring such stereotypical markers of illness to hospital |
| **20** | * Ambiguous request – Too ill/close to death to receive visitors? Or simply sick of the ‘swarm of eyes’ and wants to spend final days on her own terms? (Another rejection of expected hospital etiquette) |
| **21 - 24** | * ‘bags full’ / ‘under my arms’ / ‘weighted down’ – metaphorically heavy with sadness/emotion/grief * Objects removed are the stereotypical markers of illness/death: Lucozade, grapes, oranges, flowers. * Sense of unburdening the mother / freeing her |
| **24 - 25** | * Turning and waving implies a final goodbye / last look. * **Stanza break** separates speaker’s wave and the mother’s response - imitates distance between the two. * Mother waving back suggests that energy has returned. She has been revived. Not by Lucozade, but by its removal – through a rejection of the expected role of vicitim/invalid. * **Repetition** of ‘high hospital bed’ from first line – tone has changed. Optimistic now. |
| **26** | * ‘light and radiant’ – optimistic / sense of unburdened (cf. daughter’s burden carrying away trappings of illness) * ‘dandelion hours’ – metaphor continues sense of lightness and beauty, but also delicate fragility. Little time remaining / easily blown away |
| **27** | * ‘billow and whirl’ – Angelic **connotations** * **Soft consonants and vowels** * Simple statement of beauty – suggests a revelation for the speaker? |
| **28** | * ‘empty table is divine’ – Continues image of heaven/angelic transcendence (cf. negative tone of death in first stanza) * **Transferred epithet** – mother is divine * Clearing of the table removes the trappings of sickness –a final, transformative ritual |
| **29** | * ‘I carry’ – daughter has unburdened her mother. Instrumental in removing the sadness. * ‘orange nostaligia’ – repeated from earlier – this time given a positive tone. Carrying the objects (including the Lucozade away) has metaphorically revitalised the mother on her death bed, in a way the Lucozade could never literally achieve. * ‘singing an old song’ – joyful, happy **connotations** . |

**Overview notes**

* + Note the symmetrical structure of the poem balanced around the colon in line 14. This marks the move from the depiction of a stereotypical hospital death-bed, to a redefinition (on the Mother’s own terms) of how she will face death. The poem serves as a reflection on the speaker’s changing attitude towards her mother’s death.
  + (While the poem could be read more generally about illness – that the daughter’s actions literally bring energy and vitality back to the mother - it is hard to read the penultimate stanza, with its heavenly connotations, this way. A literal reading would also grossly simplify and obscure the poem’s complex themes of how embracing life can be the best response to death, and how death itself is coloured only by our attitudes towards it)
  + There is also a shift in the speaker’s perspective and tone between the poem’s opening and ending. This appears to be caused by her ability to perform the cleansing ritual of removing all the symbols of sickness from the Mother’s bedside.
  + The title – ‘Lucozade’ – is complex. It refers to the literal bottle (one of the aforementioned traditional symbols of sickness), but there is also a sense that the daughter’s actions are the real revitalising energy boost that the Mother needs. Furthermore, the idea of Lucozade as a childhood memory associated with being ill (‘orange nostalgia’) is also explored in the poem, and there is a clear sense that in the final line, that the daughter’s final act for her Mother might be a memory in the making – a moment looked back on nostalgically in the future.