

i wanna be yours

Overview:

'...it's the classic thing of the desire to make yourself useful to the object of your desire, taken to a pathological degree to the point where you're actually reducing yourself to a commodity.' John Cooper Clarke

An informal, humorous yet direct poem using everyday objects to explore love and the desire to be needed. This poem rejects many of the conventions of love poetry and portrays an all-consuming love.

Context: Manchester poet John Cooper Clarke became famous in the mid-late 1970s when he was known as the 'punk poet'. Much of his work was set to music by The Invisible Girls, a Salford rock band formed specifically for this purpose. Is this poem lyrical? (*deep deep de deep*) His poetry comes under the broad heading social realism – a genre rooted in British films of the 1960s. The everyday, working class objects he uses in 'i wanna be yours' (electric meter, setting lotion, Ford Cortina etc.) are the opposite of what some may expect from 'love poetry' yet this is a popular poem to be read at C21st weddings. (Why do you think this is?) The Arctic Monkeys singer and lyricist Alex Turner has said he was inspired by the poem 'i wanna be yours' while still at school and the band's musical version is included as the closing track on their 2013 album.

Structure:

- Minimal punctuation leads to an increasingly breathless, fast delivery. This could evoke a sense of insistence or pleading – the repetition of 'let me' also adds to this mixed message.
- The repetitive refrain 'i wanna be yours' also contributes to the overall tone of the poem, which manages to be almost obsessively fervent, but simultaneously light-hearted and humorous.

Key Images:

- use of contemporary slang/informal register (wanna) maintains directness of the message.
- the use of an informal register is in keeping with the poet's choice of metaphors taken from the everyday
- Many of the objects (raincoat, electric heater, setting lotion) give the idea that the speaker wants to protect and care for the person he is speaking to. Others such as the Cortina and electric meter suggest reliability.
- The penultimate line 'I don't wanna be hers' reveals the surprising fact that the relationship is more complicated than it seems. It is up to the reader to imagine a 'back story' as to who the other woman is as nothing more is said on the subject!

Potential Comparisons

Unusual comparisons for love: Valentine, Love's Dog. Or contrast with poems like Sonnet 43 which also conveys an **all-consuming love**.

John Cooper Clark



Most likely question top come up overall is: **different types of love** (or variations of this question). Most of the poems fit with this. Make sure you prepare it.