

Date 11 / 9 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie Picture / LyricTitle Monarch ButterflyAuthor / Director / Hope Ryden

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

I found this picture under the animal photography section of nationalgeographic.com.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc? )

The photo depicts a beautiful monarch butterfly in nature or some sort of forest with its distinctive mosaic pattern of orange, black, and white. The butterfly has its wings almost fully closed, and it is perched upon some sort of flowering plant. The flowers of the plant consist of oranges, yellows, and reds, and only some of them seem to have fully bloomed yet.

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

This photo truly displays the concept of deception and the distinction between reality and appearance. Although the monarch butterfly is enticing and alluring because of its appealing and attractive shape and design, its beauty is actually used to aid in its own perpetuation through the demise and destruction of its predators. Because the butterflies feed on milkweed plants as larvae, they store poisons known as cardiac glycosides, which can actually be deadly to vertebrates if too much of it is consumed. Thus, the way the butterfly outwardly appears is entirely incompatible with its inner destructive capabilities, obscuring the way that it should be perceived.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

This picture is taken in full color from a sideways angle of the butterfly, and everything in the picture is blurred but the butterfly and the flowers. The beauty of the butterfly symbolizes deception and the ambiguity of perception, as its appearance is entirely misleading.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

I have always found pictures of nature and organisms in their natural habitat quite intriguing because they truly show the patterns and interactions of different species in their purest forms especially considering I will never be able to see in person most of the organisms that inhabit the earth. They completely capture the beauty and diversity of the world in merely simple frames of life, and that is what makes them so compelling and interesting to look at. The concept of appearances versus reality and perception evident in the monarch butterfly can also be seen in Annie Dillard's essay "Seeing" when she describes various instances in nature in which perception is obscured and things do not turn out as expected. For example, one day she is seemingly walking up to a calm and peaceful tree, when all of the sudden a large amount of birds darts and flees away. She did not see the birds because they were concealed behind the leaves of the trees. I do find the subjectivity and ambiguity of perception a poetic concept because it almost implies that nothing can be known for certain. Humans have a limit to their expansion and capacity, and perception is one of those limits. A lack of understanding of the knowledge of the world due to faulty appearances ultimately prevents the perfection of mankind, and humanity needs to accept that fact for the better.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)