

regret
limitations

(Frost's argument that all
poetry + most thinking
is metaphor) 6 - After Apple-Picking (North of Boston, 1915)
very clear literal situation - opportunity for
metaphorical interpretation

Autumn -
death of the
year

reflective

sweetness, health

temptation/mortality? religious allusions

After Apple-Picking

return to first
person, isolation

specific

biblical - Jacob's ladder?

climbed by angels

colloquial

loose iambic pentameter -

occasional loss of control

- slipping into sleep?

A My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree transitional

B Toward heaven still. - hasn't yet put away - in process of tidying up task

B And there's a barrel that I didn't fill - regret, acknowledgement

A Beside it, and there may be two or three

uncertain, casual

C Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.

Contrasts -

Sleep + activity

Winter + Summer

dream + real

metaphor + literal

C But I am done with apple-picking now. declarative, finality - statement to himself as much
scent = hibernation - storage? setting: evening as to us - forced focus away from regret

D Essence of winter sleep is on the night,

suffused with sleepiness caesura colloquial, half asleep

E The scent of apples; I am drowsing off. confusion of gradual unconsciousness evoked
as if on waking - removing sleepiness by lack of clarity - caesura suggests
attempt at wakefulness

D I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight

F I got from looking through a pane of glass distortion of ice

Link to Keat's Ode to

A Nightingale - "a

drowsy numbness pains

my senses"

E I skimmed this morning from the water-trough,

frosted

F And held against the world of hoary grass. winter despite harvest of summer

G It melted, and I let it fall and break.

H But I was well

blurred concept of time

H Upon my way to sleep before it fell, - and has been on his way to sleep all day?

H And I could tell fatigued vulnerability manifests itself in an escalating
slippage of control from regular iambic pentameter to shortened
lines, like someone nodding off

G What form my dreaming was about to take.

incessant, infinite task

surreal vision

I Magnified apples appear and reappear, repeated motion - hypnotic

J Stem end and blossom end,

I And every fleck of russet showing clear.

G My instep arch not only keeps the ache, physical legacy of work
- clear consequence bodily memories of the experience -
kinesthetic images

K It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.

Sensory experience

suspended
between reality/
dream world

- auditory hallucination, echo of earlier
- L And I keep hearing from the cellar-bin
- K That rumbling sound
onomatopoeia - evoked by rhythm + plosive repetition
- L Of load on load of apples coming in. sound of sense
- M For I have had too much
- N Of apple-picking; I am overtired
- N Of the great harvest I myself desired. knowledge, mortality
ironic danger of ambition
connoting reward, satisfaction has all that effort been worth it?
hyperbole has he achieved his expectation?
- M There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch, - delicate
- O Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall, monotony contrasted with concern
- O For all biblical reference - corruption
- P That struck the earth, corruption
- Q No matter if not bruised, or spiked with stubble,
plosives indicate damage
excessively harsh, certainty, relentless
- R Went surely to the cider-apple heap
- P As of no worth. so easily condemned!
- Q One can see what will trouble has the harvest been a failure?
can he only focus on regret?
- S This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.
whatever sleep could it be? quality? length? endless?
- T Were he not gone,
(groundhog) familiarity
- S The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
hibernation
- T Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
euphemism for death / regeneration
- R Or just some human sleep.
- human as exposed by isolation