**Skunk Hour**

By [Robert Lowell](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/robert-lowell)

*(For Elizabeth Bishop)*

Nautilus Island’s hermit

heiress still lives through winter in her Spartan cottage;

her sheep still graze above the sea.

Her son’s a bishop. Her farmer

is first selectman in our village;

she’s in her dotage.

……….

Please find the rest of the poem in the internet or an anthology and read the rest of the poem. Read at least three times and provide following information for the poem:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Persona: |  |
| Tone: |  |
| Mood: |  |
| Figures of Speech: |  |
| Most striking images: |  |
| Formal Properties: |  |

Notes/Questions for You

Respond to the following comment by Troy Jollimore. To what extend is his commentary acceptable?

“Skunk Hour” expresses the turmoil of Lowell’s personal life at this crucial point. It is a poem framed by matriarchal images, and built around an analogy between art and voyeurism. It also dramatizes an inner debate between the demands of formality and discretion on the one hand and, on the other, the longing for an open and candid poetry that would capture the life of a privileged and educated American man in the middle of the 20th century.

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What are the major themes developed in the poem?

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What are the confessional elements in the poem?

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What kind of personal anxieties discussed r touched upon in the poem ?

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