

GARY FOUNTAIN

“BLINKING MY FLASHLIGHT OFF AND ON”

Elizabeth Bishop’s Internal Battlefield



“There was no question in her mind of her own rightness, or of her being at the center of her own world and of her being able to find her way through it. She was absolutely sure of that in a way which at that age not many people are” (Fountain and Brazeau 28). So seemed the adolescent Elizabeth Bishop to a high school classmate, Joan Collingwood Disney. Yet Disney also observed a vexing discontent about Bishop, particularly during one vacation from school:

There was this big gap in Elizabeth’s life. Elizabeth didn’t talk much about her childhood. It was too difficult. . . . A terrible sadness would cause her to be despondent. I remember exactly how she looked one time when she was leaving our house in Plymouth, Massachusetts, after a visit. It was a very sad look that stayed with me. Maybe the right word would have kept her there. (28)

The young Elizabeth Bishop, seemingly equipped with precocious self-assurance, could also experience aching moments of homelessness. Or, worse, moments of radical disorientation, for even when she was a child, as “In the Waiting Room” tells us, Bishop’s command “of her own world” could give way abruptly to a sensation of “falling off / the round, turning world / into cold, blue-black space” (*Complete Poems* 57-59). “The War was on” (95), Bishop writes in the final stanza of this harrowing poem, referring to WWI and, one suspects, to the initial skir-

mishes of an internal battle that she was to fight throughout her life.

As Disney suggests, Bishop's sense of homelessness was imprinted on her character in childhood, perhaps when she was shuttled back and forth between Canada and the United States, the native homes of her parents. Many who knew Bishop later in her life identified her feeling of displacement with her ambivalent sense of national identity. According to the pianist Arthur Gold, the Elizabeth Bishop he and his partner Robert Fizdale first met in the 1940s was "very soignée" and her clothing "always suggested a tiny bit of English elegance— not an American jazzy elegance" (Fountain and Brazeau 136). On the other hand, as Gold also observed, "Elizabeth was very provincial. . . . She was always the slightly Henry Jamesian character in a cosmopolitan atmosphere" (138). Joseph Frank found Bishop curiously transnational in character when he met her in Washington DC in 1949:

I didn't even know if Elizabeth was American or not. I wasn't quite clear because she spoke so much about Nova Scotia. I had the feeling that she didn't feel at home in this country somehow, that she was rather alien . . . because [of the way her] early years had shaped her sensibility. . . . She wasn't a regular fellow— she was more Canadian and more English than she was American. Probably the more formalized Latin culture that she lived in in Brazil [beginning in 1951] suited her much more than ordinary life in the States. (116)

How did Bishop's "early years . . . [shape] her [alien] sensibility"?

In her autobiographical story "The Country Mouse," Bishop writes of her early alienation, as she describes the months in 1917 and 1918 (she was six and seven) when she lived in Worcester, Massachusetts, with her paternal grandparents. She had been living with her mother's parents in Great Village, Nova Scotia, following her mother's being admitted to an asylum for the mentally ill in Dartmouth (her father had died within the year after Elizabeth's birth), when the Bishops decided that Elizabeth would have a better life with them and brought her to the United

States. Bishop describes feeling as if she “were being kidnapped” (“The Country Mouse” 14) from Canada by her Worcester grandparents:

I had been brought back unconsulted and against my wishes to the house my father had been born in, to be saved from a life of poverty and provincialism, bare feet, suet puddings, unsanitary school slates, perhaps even from the inverted *r*'s of my mother's family. (17)

As Bishop describes her towering, “god-like” (13) grandfather, John W. Bishop, Sr., on the train from Halifax to Boston, with his suspenders and “thick silver hair and short silver beard,” he resembles a disgruntled Uncle Sam, come to whisk Elizabeth off to the superior United States, where her grandmother, who traced her roots deep into United States soil and was probably a member of the D.A.R., will indoctrinate her in new loyalties:

I was presented with a white card with an American flag in color at the top. All the stanzas of “Oh, say, can you see” were printed on it in dark blue letters. Every day I sat at Grandma's feet and attempted to recite this endless poem. (27)

In fact, a significant element of the drama of Bishop's writing is the struggle of identity resulting from a conflict between nations, a war on the battlefield of her consciousness that she survived through cautious rhetorical strategies.

Bishop's was a layered national experience during her youth, for during her months living in Canada, she had avidly pledged her allegiance to the English Crown. She tells us in “The Country Mouse” that she had grown used to starting each school day with “God Save the King” and “The Maple Leaf Forever.” Thus, singing the “Star-Spangled Banner” in Worcester made her feel “like a traitor” (26). Surrounded as she was in these months by an invigorated patriotism in the United States during WWI, Bishop felt, “I wanted us to win the War, of course, but I didn't want to be an American.” One favorite schoolmate was “a beautiful boy named Royal Something. His name made him

doubly attractive to me, stuffed as I was with the English royal family, although I realized he wasn't really royal" (24). So, while in Worcester, where she hoped for a United States victory, she longed for Canada, where she had revered an imaginary, regal England, as degree compounded degree of separation in Bishop's childhood psyche.

In "First Death in Nova Scotia," Bishop explores the mythic—if not religious—power that nationality and national symbols held for her when she was a child. The scene is the death of her cousin Arthur (actually her cousin Frank) when she and he were both children, as Bishop describes her mother laying out Arthur's body and coaxing her to place a lily of the valley into Arthur's hands. Arthur's body lies "beneath the chromographs: / Edward, Prince of Wales, / with Princess Alexandra, / and King George with Queen Mary" (2-5). Below the regal portraits, hovering above the coffin like religious icons,¹ "stood a stuffed loon . . . on his white, frozen lake, / the marble-topped table" (8, 15-16). Thus Bishop draws our attention to two cultural symbols that are oddly aligned. The red glass eye of the loon ("much to be desired," 20) and its paradoxically "cold and caressable" (18) white breast find their counterparts in the "red [velvet] and ermine" (42) in which the royal couples are draped. The lineage of royalty is echoed by a simpler lineage of "Uncle / Arthur, Arthur's father" (9-10), as the contrasting worlds of England and Canada (London and Great Village), royalty and farmers, the colonizer and the colonized, are—perhaps comically?²—juxtaposed and aligned.

A doubling, echoing effect is also present in the language of the poem, in the "cold, cold parlor" (1) and the repeated " 'Come' " (21-22) of Bishop's mother: " 'Come,' said my mother, / 'Come and say good-bye / to your little cousin Arthur' " (21-23). There are two kinds of stylistic repetition in this poem: one representing stasis and resistance, associated with death ("cold, cold"), the other suggesting a child searching for correspondences, familiarities, a kind of relief from one world provided by an echo of elements in another. In fact, linguistic repetition is the stylistic trademark of Bishop's poems about national identity through which she presents the dramatic interaction between the renewal that can come through relationship between different places and the static, deathlike ennui that can

overpower the exile. "Crusoe in England," was we shall see, Bishop's most unremitting example of the latter.

Each national symbol in "First Death in Nova Scotia"—the Royal Family, the Canadian loon, Jack Frost—offers Elizabeth its own wisdom, its own mythology of transcendence, its own solution to the problem of death at the center of the poem. The loon possesses a mysterious knowledge—"He kept his own counsel" (14), about death, one would assume, in this down-home, humorous aside—and the Royal Family dwells self-confidently in its world of security, grace, comfort, and wealth. The latter "invited Arthur to be / the smallest page at court" (45-46), but Elizabeth wonders how Arthur will find his way "with his eyes shut up so tight / and the roads deep in snow?" (49-50). Closer to home, Jack Frost, whom Elizabeth imagines painting the maple leaf symbol of Canada, might transform Arthur into a lovely doll, as her taxidermist Uncle Arthur has the loon, but Jack Frost has left Arthur incompletely rendered, adding only a few touches to his hair: "Jack Frost had dropped the brush / and left him white, forever" (39-40). This "forever" echoes that in the Canadian anthem, which Bishop diminishes by parentheses: "the way he always painted / the Maple Leaf (Forever)" (35-36). Arthur may not find "forever" in either place. Is there a "forever"? Elizabeth seems to be asking.

Arthur inhabits a limbo of mysterious affiliations and ultimately ineffectual, or at least indeterminate, powers. His death raises questions about the different states of Bishop's childhood loyalty, one immediate, another imagined. Does one "belong" to these nationalistic realms? How does one "inhabit" them? On what terms do they correspond to each other? And what of that enigmatic loon eyeing Arthur's coffin—just as, we imagine, Uncle Arthur had eyed the loon itself through his rifle's sight? Does her dead cousin Arthur represent some way in which Bishop felt herself ambushed, caught in the problematical crossfire between nationalities, as a child?

Bishop presents herself as the victim of nationalistic hostility in her narrative of the lonely childhood months in Worcester, "The Country Mouse." At the conclusion of this memoir, she describes the "[t]hree great truths that came home to [her] during this stretch of [her] life" (31). One is a "feeling of absolute and utter desolation" (32) that she experiences one day

while she is sitting in the office of her aunt's dentist, a microcosm, with its unsettling aura of pain, of the Worcester into which she had been displaced. Here she experiences an abrupt and startling sense of her self, her individuality: "I felt . . . *myself*" (33). On the one hand, this sense of selfhood creates for Elizabeth a kinship with the "two men and a plump middle-aged lady" (32) with her in the office. Yet this perception of self in relation to others, a new sense of belonging that, one imagines, could offset the misery of her isolation in Worcester, is accompanied by confusion and falseness:

I felt *I,I,I*, and looked at the three strangers in panic. I was *one* of them, too, inside my scabby body and wheezing lungs. "You're in for it now," something said. How had I got tricked into such a false position? I would be like that woman opposite who smiled at me so falsely every once in a while. (33)

In the waiting room of this alien country—a space that also has the psychological resonance of a claustrophobic, abrupt transition from childhood and adulthood, without any adolescence for adjustment—Elizabeth finds herself trapped, like a player in a psychological game of chess, in a complex, paradoxical position. On the one hand, she senses that "inside" she possesses characteristics of the other people in the waiting room, that she somehow belongs or "fits" in Worcester because everyone is similarly human. On the other hand, Elizabeth finds herself alienated from this basic human self, condemned to present it falsely, "tricked" into a life of inauthentic facades. "You're in for it now," something said—in for one crack-up of false identity after another, apparently—because coming to the realization that "you are you and you are going to be *you* forever . . . was like coasting downhill . . . only much worse, and it quickly smashed into a tree."

Incident after incident in Worcester conspires to disorient and displace Elizabeth, to make her fake. From the first, she senses that she does not speak the language in this new place. Her "country" language is perceived as humorous: her grandfather laughs at her when, while on the train to Boston, she vomits "into something I referred to—probably thinking of farm

accoutrements I was more familiar with than bathrooms— as a ‘hopper’ ” (14). Elizabeth hears language she has not known before, like the phrase “*apple-pie order*”: “it baffled me” (22). And, finally, a new language reduces her to an abstraction and her life to play, as she relates in a droll passage that smacks of Lewis Carroll:

. . . if only grandma hadn’t had such a confusing way of talking. It was almost as if we were playing house. She would speak of “grandma” and “little girls” and “fathers” and “being good”— things I had never before considered in the abstract, or rarely in the third person. In particular, there seemed to be much, much more to being a “little” girl than I had realized; the prospect was beginning to depress me. (16)

In one haunting echo of imagery, after Bishop has described herself on the train, “stretching my tiny bones on what they had called a ‘sofa’ ” (14), she describes the lace-like neck of her grandmother’s dress as “a small structure of the net stretched on little bones . . . like a miniature fish weir” (15). Elizabeth was ensnared in this new world.

There are some comforting correspondences in Worcester: her Grandfather Bishop is walleyed, a characteristic that “seemed all right and natural, because my grandmother on the other side in Canada had a glass eye” (13); his practical temperament is “like (one gathers) the Duke of Wellington” (15); and one day, in a tender attempt to soothe his granddaughter’s homesickness for farm life in Great Village, John Bishop buys Elizabeth “two little hens and one rooster” that made her feel that she “could have cried with pleasure” (30). John Bishop was himself an immigrant from Canada, and his United States veneer was thinner than his wife’s. However, Elizabeth finds her only true comfort in the other immigrants in the house, particularly Agnes, the maid, who is constantly lectured to polish the mahogany dining room table “*With the grain*” (20). Elizabeth is attracted to Agnes “because Grandma fought with her constantly” (20).

Bishop’s narrative of her sad tenure in Worcester is characterized by references to fighting, violence, and warfare. Her

grandmother and Uncle Neddy argue every Sunday morning: "I was frightened; I thought they were really fighting and were about to come to blows" (28), she says, although these battles always end amicably, with Uncle Neddy kissing his mother and sending her off to church. Bishop's grandfather argues over religion with his neighbor: he would "demolish her logic" (23) after tricking her by seeming to accede in to her arguments. His strategy echoes Bishop's notion that Worcester "tricked [her] into . . . a false position" (33). At breakfast Uncle Neddy "would insist on making jokes [Elizabeth] couldn't understand, and talking about spankings and other horrors" (30). Plus there is the daily presence of World War I: Ronald, the chauffeur, who with his uniform looks like "a new kind of soldier" (16) and tells Elizabeth about his son in the army; Aunt Jenny's "War Work"; the marching and the singing of patriotic songs at school; and the books of war cartoons with "German helmets and cut-off hands" (27). The numbing effect of all of these is compounded by Elizabeth's perception of the unsettling confluence of nationality and death stirred by her thoughts about her father's death in Worcester. As Bishop notes, when she sings "*Land where my father died / Land of the pilgrims' pride*"—for a long time I took the first line personally" (24). In the national anthem, the lines "*Between his loved home and the war's desolation*" made me think of my dead father, and conjured up strange pictures in my mind" (27). In these lines her moment of "absolute and utter desolation" (31) in the dentist's waiting room is echoed by the song's reference to "war's desolation." Agnes, the hardy immigrant who created a happy community of servants in the house, kept up the fight, resolutely refusing to go "with the grain," but even she, finally, in effect, concedes and goes home, returning to Sweden to marry. At this point, Elizabeth loses the war in Worcester: "After [Agnes left], things went from bad to worse. First came constipation, then eczema again, and finally asthma. I felt myself aging, even dying" (31).

Bishop's body was under assault throughout her time at Worcester. She was forced against her will to ingest the codes of a new country, and thus her vomiting on the train from Halifax, an action repeated by Beppo, her aunt's dog, who "adopted" (21) Elizabeth. Beppo "begged for sympathy and understanding" and developed a "delicate stomach" because of his nervousness over

“imaginary dangers.” Bishop’s final reference to her eczema and asthma, her “scabby body and wheezing lungs” (33), brings to mind mustard gas and trench warfare. Stunned in the crossfire of these various nationalistic and psychological forces, Bishop describes herself lying in her sick bed at night, “blinking my flashlight off and on” (31), like a wounded soldier on the battlefield flashing an SOS.

Bishop deepens and darkens her paradigm of struggle with nationalistic identity in “In the Waiting Room.” The pictures Bishop describes seeing in the *National Geographic*—the American “Osa and Martin Johnson / dressed in riding breeches, / laced boots, and pith helmets” (21-23) juxtaposed to cannibalism and the tribal customs of “[b]abies with pointed heads / . . . black, naked women with necks / wound round and round with wire” (26, 28-29)—all have colonialist overtones and the final stanza of the poem repeats a line from “The Country Mouse”: “The War was on” (95). Between these references to the alien, bodily distortion, and violence, Bishop offers a different rendition of her experience in the dentist’s office: rather than seeing herself primarily as desolate, Bishop imagines herself globally homeless, without any national center of gravity, “falling off / the round, turning world” (57-58). As she stares at the magazine in an attempt to keep herself from falling, we sense her grasping for some national geographic, some orientation in a place or nation. At the conclusion of the poem, Bishop manages to relocate herself, to regain some geographical footing: “Then I was back in it. / The War was on. Outside, / In Worcester, Massachusetts . . .” (94-96). How unsettling that the location and condition of her exile (Worcester and war) become Bishop’s points of stability and orientation—cold comfort, indeed.

Bishop’s poetic style in this and other later poems is a response to her exile, a rhetoric of universal identity and tentative correspondence that establishes her fragile accommodation in this alien, violent world. “The Country Mouse” foreshadows this style in Bishop’s description of the other people in the waiting room, a style characterized by a general, impersonal pronoun, italics, and a question: “I was *one* of them, too. . . . *Why* was I a human being?” (33). Bishop’s mature style asserts a general identification with others, yet questions the reason for this identification—she locates herself in a community then dislocates

herself in this community's more complex philosophical perspective. In this play with grammar we find Bishop, in effect, balancing the two elements in her personality that Joan Disney had noticed when Bishop was young, a simultaneous confidence or assertiveness of "being at the center of her own world" tempered by an abiding sense of homelessness.

In "In the Waiting Room," Bishop establishes a sense of community through a rhetoric of assertion, repetition, and correlation. Her statements build from a specific pronoun, to a proper noun, to a general pronoun, all accentuated by italics: "But I felt, you are an *I*, / you are an *Elizabeth*, / you are one of *them*" (60-62). This affirmation is qualified by skepticism: "*Why* should you be one, too?" (64). Question follows question, as Bishop searches for correspondences: "Why should I be . . . ? What similarities . . . ? How had I come . . . ?" (75, 77, 86). An interrogative adverb introduces a question, is interrupted by a qualifying statement, then the interrogative is repeated, until finally an assertion is offered in quotation marks followed by an ellipsis, all of these rhetorical and grammatical twists creating degree upon degree of qualification: "How—I don't know any / word for it—how 'unlikely' . . ." (84-85). Tenuous correspondence, often at one or two degrees of remove, maps the terrain of Bishop's geographic no-man's land.

Bishop's deepest fear is that there are no correspondences for the exiled, that everything is lost in translation. She contemplates this situation in "Crusoe in England." Bishop herself said that in this poem she wanted to rewrite the Crusoe story without its Christianity; she also rewrote it without its colonizing vigor. Her Crusoe is locked into the monotonously repetitious life of one for whom there are no echoes of his prior experiences, where the world before him multiplies itself in endless, meaningless repetition. "The sun set in the sea; the same old sun / rose from the sea, / and there was one of it and one of me" (65-67), says Crusoe, echoing "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." There is a face-off between Crusoe and this place: at one point, frustrated by the incomprehensible and deadeningly repetitious "*Baa, baa, baa* and *shriek, shriek, shriek, / baa . . . shriek . . . baa . . .*" (104-105) of the goats and gulls, he grabs the beard of a goat and stares into its eyes: "His pupils . . . / . . . expressed nothing" (122-123). Correspondence is lost in layer upon layer of remove, and

memory fails on this island: a group of snails reminds Crusoe of irises, which remind him of daffodils, thus bringing to mind Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud": "They flash upon the inward eye, / which is the bliss . . . ' Bliss of what? / One of the first things that I did / when I got back was look it up" (96-99). Even Friday participates in the island's static, infertile repetition of having "one kind of everything" (68): "Friday was nice, and we were friends. / If only he had been a woman! / I wanted to propagate my kind" (146-148).

"And then one day they came and took us off" (153), says Crusoe, and we hear the echo of a kidnapping from Great Village. Back in England he says, "I'm bored" (159), and we hear a lonely child in Worcester saying, "I was *bored* and lonely" ("The Country Mouse" 31). Crusoe finds that in England objects from the island have lost their meaning and life: the parasol that protected him from the island's sun "looks like a plucked and skinny fowl" (179), the "living soul" (169) of the knife that had come to hold meaning for him "like a crucifix" (162) has "dribbled away" (169), and Friday was killed by a disease of the dominating, civilized world: "— And Friday, my dear Friday, died of measles / seventeen years ago come March" (181-182). Death of the innocent, childlike Friday, whom Crusoe identified with the baby goats that he carried around and raced on the island, is a haunting echo of other childhood deaths in Bishop's work (Cousin Arthur's, and Bishop feeling herself dying in Worcester). In this poem Bishop reflects on her lifelong struggle with exile, as Crusoe, her older self (Bishop after her exile from Brazil following the death of her sixteen-year companion there), contemplates the death at the hands of an invading nation of Friday, her younger self. Even if one were to return home, after years of exile, Bishop suggests in this her darkest take on her nationalistic paradigm, one would still be in exile— or as she puts it in "Questions of Travel," " *'home, / wherever that may be?'* " (66-67).

Nationalism and warfare rise to the surface as the overt subjects for contemplation in a number of Bishop's poems: "Roosters," "View of the Capitol from the Library of Congress," "Brazil, January 1, 1502," "Visits to St. Elizabeths," and "From Trollope's Journal"— which ends with the pointed critique, "The soldiers poison the air" (28)—to name a few. The issue of warfare, though, lies close to Bishop's heart, as her reflections

upon her early life suggest. In fact, Bishop hints in more than one piece that warfare may be endemic to the psychology of the human heart, to being human. “*Why* was I a human being?” (33) she asks at the conclusion of “The Country Mouse.” What does it mean to be human? “The Armadillo” suggests that one answer to this latter question is inevitable war within oneself.

Love and war, as if locked in combat, begin and conclude a single line in “The Armadillo”: “Venus going down, or Mars” (12). Once the illegal fire balloons that are released to celebrate St. John’s Day (June 24) in Brazil climb far into the sky, they are difficult to distinguish from these two planets. These fiery emblems of rebellion (“illegal,” 3) and religious aspiration, “rising toward a saint / still honored in these parts” (5-6), can either ascend into a calm sky and “steer between / the kite sticks of the Southern Cross” (15-16) or “suddenly [turn] dangerous” (20), when they become caught in a downdraft, exploding like fire bombs against the hillside, displacing the owls, rabbits, and armadillos that live there. Thwarted aspirations and longings produce violence. The wise (“ancient” owls, 29), the “innocent” (a baby rabbit), and the “ignorant” (an armadillo, 40) suffer displacement at the hands of the more powerful: “*O falling fire and piercing cry / and panic . . .*” (38-39).

This “*piercing cry*” resonates throughout Bishop’s writing, echoing both the “*oh!* of pain” (“In the Waiting Room” 37) from Aunt Consuelo that disorients Elizabeth in the waiting room of the dentist’s office in Worcester and the mad scream of Bishop’s mother during the years of her mental decline, while Bishop was a child, as described in “In the Village”: “The scream hangs like that, unheard, in memory— in the past, in the present, and those years between. It was not even loud to begin with, perhaps. It just came there to live, forever— not loud, just alive forever” (251). In some ways, then, this poem addresses those moments of displacement and exile, of loss of home, family, and, specifically, mother, that haunted Bishop throughout her life. One senses particular personal poignance in the line, “Last night another big one fell” (21). What specific, immediate defeat, one wonders, generated this haunting meditation?

Mars dominates this poem of love’s sacred longing, of fire balloons that “flush and fill with light / that comes and goes, like hearts” (7-8). Bishop presents two possible outcomes of such

longing. Neither, however, offers fulfillment. The balloons that climb steadily “forsak[e] us” (18), and we hear Christ’s last words in this saint’s day poem: unimpeded desires abandon us to our lonely crucifixions on this earth. Venus, after all, is “going down” (12). Those longings that are caught in the “downdraft” (19) of the gravity of human conflict turn “dangerous” (20) and spread their venom, descending like Venus: “The flame ran down” (24).

Bishop offers three reactions to this psychological fire bombing. First, there is complete displacement and homelessness, as the owls’ nest is destroyed and these birds “shrieked up out of sight” (28). It also seems that a part of the self— childlike, innocent, caressable, and imaginative (those “ignited eyes”)— can survive, phoenix-like risen from, or actually composed of, the ashes of destruction: “and then a baby rabbit jumped out, / *short-eared*, to our surprise. / So soft!— a handful of intangible ash / with fixed, ignited eyes” (33-36). And, finally, Mars is met on his own terms, if not with equivalent power, in the figure of the armored armadillo: “*a weak mailed fist / clenched ignorant against the sky*” (39-40). Each creature represents a characteristic of the mature Bishop: the first haunted and periodically disoriented her; the second, magically and inexplicably, kept her vibrant and creative; and the third, given a certain prominence in this poem by its concluding position, gave voice to frustration and provided some defense against defeat. This weak, clenched fist of the frustrated armadillo returns us to Joan Collingood Disney, with whose observations we began, and who at Walnut Hill noticed that Bishop periodically fell prey to a bitter cynicism: “Occasionally she was close to cynicism. . . . She was trembling on the brink of being rather harsh when it was unnecessary” (Fountain and Brazeau 28). Of course, it was necessary, to survive the war. ☞

Notes

1. For a discussion of the implications of iconography in this poem, see Bonnie Costello’s deft analysis in *Elizabeth Bishop, Questions of Mastery*, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991. 193-98.

2. The naïve, young Elizabeth seems simply to note these two objects, but one also senses a certain irony or satire in the Royal Family being juxtaposed to a loon. Bonnie Costello draws attention to the rich dual perspective of this and other of Bishop's poems (see above).

Works Cited

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