The Mosquito

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When did you start your tricks

Monsieur?

What do you stand on such high legs for?

Why this length of shredded shank

You exaltation?

Is it so that you shall lift your centre of gravity upwards

And weigh no more than air as you alight upon me,

Stand upon me weightless, you phantom?

I heard a woman call you the Winged Victory

In sluggish Venice.

You turn your head towards your tail, and smile.

How can you put so much devilry

Into that translucent phantom shred

Of a frail corpus?

Queer, with your thin wings and your streaming legs

How you sail like a heron, or a dull clot of air,

A nothingness.

Yet what an aura surrounds you;

Your evil little aura, prowling, and casting a numbness on my mind.

That is your trick, your bit of filthy magic:

Invisibility, and the anæsthetic power

To deaden my attention in your direction.

But I know your game now, streaky sorcerer.

Queer, how you stalk and prowl the air

In circles and evasions, enveloping me,

Ghoul on wings

Winged Victory.

Settle, and stand on long thin shanks

Eyeing me sideways, and cunningly conscious that I am aware,

You speck.

I hate the way you lurch off sideways into air

Having read my thoughts against you.

Come then, let us play at unawares,

And see who wins in this sly game of bluff.

Man or mosquito.

You don't know that I exist, and I don't know that you exist.

Now then!

It is your trump

It is your hateful little trump

You pointed fiend,

Which shakes my sudden blood to hatred of you:

It is your small, high, hateful bugle in my ear.

Why do you do it?

Surely it is bad policy.

They say you can't help it.

If that is so, then I believe a little in Providence protecting the innocent.

But it sounds so amazingly like a slogan

A yell of triumph as you snatch my scalp.

Blood, red blood

Super-magical

Forbidden liquor.

I behold you stand

For a second enspasmed in oblivion,

Obscenely ecstasied

Sucking live blood

My blood.

Such silence, such suspended transport,

Such gorging,

Such obscenity of trespass.

You stagger

As well as you may.

Only your accursed hairy frailty

Your own imponderable weightlessness

Saves you, wafts you away on the very draught my anger makes in its snatching.

Away with a pæan of derision

You winged blood-drop.

Can I not overtake you?

Are you one too many for me

Winged Victory?

Am I not mosquito enough to out-mosquito you?

Queer, what a big stain my sucked blood makes

Beside the infinitesimal faint smear of you!

Queer, what a dim dark smudge you have disappeared into!

Structure

Tone

Queer

Questions

Labels; titles to be addressed by

Connotations

Direct address

The purpose of this text is to… (1)

The narrator commences by…(2)

He develops his ideas by…(1-2)

Lawrence makes powerful use of… to suggest/imply/create/evoke…(3)

Being a poem, the extensive use of … is to be expected. … (3)

His ideas/feelings about … are further underlined through …(3)

Overall, Lawrence … (2)